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Tenant Futures

External Evaluation of the National Communities Resource Centre's Tenant Training Programme

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Evaluator: Eileen Herden

LSE Housing and Communities, London School of Economics and Political Science,
Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE

Tel: +44 (0) 207 955 6330; Email: lsehousingandcommunities@lse.ac.uk

Abstract

This is the final evaluation of the Tenant Futures training programme, developed and run by the National Communities Resource Centre at Trafford Hall and funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government. The evaluation is the result of an intensive study into community outcomes and impacts, based on feedback from tenant course participants, tenant grant recipients, social landlords, and contracted programme training staff. The analysis is based on 1241 individual participant evaluations, 73 in-depth interviews with tenants, social landlords and trainers, three site visits and five in-depth social impact case studies. The evidence illuminates the impressive level of community activity and personal development the training programme is achieving; and how the impacts are spreading from participants, through action plans, grants and follow-up training, into the wider community.

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the support of the dedicated staff at Trafford Hall, in particular Barbara Watson and Claire Lawton. Special thanks also goes to Liz Richardson, Anne Power and Nicola Serle for their ideas, direction and help in the management of this evaluation. Finally, a big thank you goes to the 73 tenants, social landlords and trainers who gave their time to be interviewed and provided honest and constructive feedback.

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Brief

The Department for Communities and Local Government commissioned this independent evaluation of the Tenant Futures programme run at the National Communities Resource Centre in order to gather qualitative & quantitative evidence on how the programme is helping to widen opportunities for participation at a local level, in support of Government's aims for greater tenant participation. This evaluation reports on both the programmes direct outputs in terms of training, grants and numbers of social tenants reached, but also in terms of broader and significant outcomes demonstrated in local communities around the country. The analysis is based on 1241 individual participant evaluations, 73 in-depth interviews with tenants, social landlords and trainers, three site visits and five in-depth social impact case studies.

I. SUMMARY

This is the evaluation of the Tenant Futures programme, developed and run by the National Communities Resource Centre (NCRC) at Trafford Hall and funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

The objective of the Tenant Futures programme is to offer training to social housing tenants tackling housing-related problems in low-income areas. The overall aim of the Tenant Futures programme is to strengthen the skills, confidence and capacity of tenants so that they can tackle problems in their communities, improve neighbourhoods and services, and better the life chances of residents.

More specifically, the training programme gives residents skills and practical ideas in two ways. First, much of the training is developed specifically for tenants who are members of Tenant Panels. The functions of Panels are decided locally, but include decision-making, monitoring and scrutiny of social landlords' activities, handling complaints, service reviews, influencing policy directions and various other functions. Panels also help landlords shape services around the needs of tenants. Secondly, tenants develop the expertise to organise information events, resolve local problems such as anti-social behaviour, play a wider role in improving housing repairs and estate and housing management, identify service efficiencies, and develop an understanding of how to respond to welfare reform.

The Tenant Futures programme was set up with funding from DCLG in October 2011. The programme will end in September 2013, unless additional funding is secured.

All Tenant Futures courses are residential over two or three days, and aim to bring social housing tenants from across England together to share ideas and experiences, learn new skills, increase levels of confidence and share best practice between tenant organisations.

A small grants programme for tenant-led projects has been in place to pump-prime follow-up action after the courses. Where action requires a small amount of seed funding, the grants are intended to allow tenants to realise solutions to problems and initiate positive outcomes in their own communities.

The final evaluation is the result of a detailed study into community outcomes and perceptions held by tenant course participants, tenant grant recipients, social landlords, and programme training staff. The analysis of 1241 individual course evaluations, 73 in-depth interviews, three site-visits and five in-depth grant social impact studies provides a comprehensive analysis of the outcomes of the Tenant Futures programme and concludes that an impressive level of community activity and personal development has been triggered by the programme.

The Tenant Futures Programme benchmarks

In October 2011 the Department for Communities and Local Government provided £535,000 in funding to the National Communities Resource Centre to run the Tenant Futures programme over a two year time frame. Three benchmarks set out in the tender document and have been met, while one is in the process of being reached.

Outcomes met:

- ✓ 62 courses were run by the end of March 2013, 24% above the target of 50
- ✓ 1241 tenants attended Tenant Futures courses, 9% above the target of 1136
- ✓ 45% of tenants attending the Tenant Futures programme are new to Trafford Hall, which meets the benchmark set by DCLG. The involvement of new tenants is an objective as this

increases the pool of active social housing residents in the UK, and spreads the benefits more widely.

Outcomes in progress:

- ✓ 67 small grants were awarded to tenants groups by June 2013, which falls below the target set for 100 grants by March 2013. In order to reach the 132 grant target, the Tenant Futures programme would need to issue 16 grants per month by October 2013.

Trafford Hall staff indicated three reasons that had led to lower levels of grant application by tenants than had been expected.

1. Some tenant groups have opted to follow up with their landlords or other charitable organisations in their requests for funding.
2. Trafford Hall staff have had less capacity than in previous funding periods to follow up with trained tenants and encourage them to apply for grants.
3. Several of the training courses related to personal skill development and do not directly translate into larger community projects.

Trafford Hall's residential training is assessed by tenants as being of a high standard

Residential training lies at the heart of the NCRC's tenant development strategy. Two and three day training courses are held at Trafford Hall and residents from low-income communities from across England travel to Chester to participate. Residential training permits concentrated focus away from the stresses of life, provide for more time than typical local half-day events, and develop networks and the sharing of best practice among tenants from across the country.

The NCRC is housed at Trafford Hall in Chester. The Centre's seven training rooms, and 53 en-suite bedrooms are part of a non-profit social enterprise.

- ✓ 94% of delegates thought Trafford Hall was good or excellent
- ✓ 87% said the catering was either good or excellent
- ✓ 42 out of 50 tenants interviewed for this study assessed the accommodation as being of high quality
- ✓ The benefit of residential training was the theme most often mentioned by tenants interviewed for this evaluation. They praised the training model for being an empowering experience, allowing for deeper focus, and developing national networks with active social housing tenants.

The tenant course evaluations of the Tenant Futures training are very positive

Following every course, each of the 1241 tenants filled out training evaluations to feedback on the quality of the training they received through the Tenant Futures programme.

- ✓ 90% of tenants recorded that the course had given them new ideas
- ✓ 80% of delegates recorded that the course had encouraged and motivated them to move forward on an idea
- ✓ 80% of delegates recorded that they did not leave the training feeling there was something missing.
- ✓ All but one course out of 64 received over 50% approval rating, with 38% receiving and approval rating of 90% or above.
- ✓ All courses were thought to be taught at the appropriate level, with 32% of courses rated at over 90% satisfaction with the level of the course.
- ✓ After training, tenants listed their top five action points to be –
 - improving the organisational structure of their tenant group;
 - spreading the information they had learnt in the training to residents in their area;
 - involving the wider community in housing-related matters;

- using the personal skills they had developed through the Tenant Futures programme; to improve the effectiveness of their work; and
- forging better relationships with landlords and community partners such as local authorities and local support charities.

Small grant outcomes

Small grants are awarded to tenants who apply to realise an idea in their community after participating in training. Tenant groups receiving grants have to submit a bid, go through an interview process and provide a detailed log of their expenditure. Based on evidence provided by monitoring reports of local grant outcomes up to March 2013, the following conclusions are drawn:

- The average level of grant given by Tenant Futures programme by the end of March 2013 was £570.
- On average, 35 tenants *directly* benefited from every grant.
- On average, 175 community residents *directly or indirectly* benefited from every Tenant Futures programme grant.
- £16 is spent on every tenant that *directly* benefited from a grant.
- £3.30 is spent on every community resident that *directly or indirectly* benefited from a grant.

Section VI of this report follows five grant case studies, showing in detail what social outcomes and potential savings to the public are initiated through the Tenant Futures programme.

- In general, no matter what the grant's aim, individual social housing tenants say they benefit from the experience of applying for the grant and managing and monitoring the outcomes; the community benefits from the spread of specific information and heightened awareness of a subject; and the landlord benefits from self-sufficient tenants who are able to affect change with low levels of support.
- The section suggests potential monetary savings to the public, not just on an individual level, but also savings accruing at the community level or local authority and to the landlord.
- The report suggests that additional funding would make it possible to follow up on more grants in detail to extrapolate monetary public savings initiated by the programme.

Landlords are unacknowledged, but substantial contributors to the Tenant Futures programme:

- ✓ At an average cost of £75 per tenant to cover training and travel expenses, participating landlords spent approximately £92,400 in the 18 months since the inception of the Tenant Futures programme on sending their tenants to Tenant Futures training. That is the equivalent of 17% of the total funding provided by DCLG.

In-depth interviews with 50 tenants, 10 grant recipient, 5 trainers and 8 landlords identified the following:

Participant Interview Feedback

- ✓ Overall participants gave **positive feedback**. Particularly, tenants who:
 - felt the quality of the Tenant Futures Programme was high and said the experience had been worth it;
 - praised Trafford Hall's facilities;
 - said the training was of high quality;
 - received landlord support to attend training at Trafford Hall;
 - were positive about how Trafford Hall had stayed in touch after training through regular updates.

- ✓ Participants advocate for the **benefits of residential training**, stating that:
 - time away from home was said to be an empowering experience;
 - fewer distractions in a residential setting allow for more focus;
 - residential training facilitates networking with other tenants.

- ✓ Five **training outcomes** were mentioned by tenants that went beyond the acquisition of **specific skills**, listed in detail in the main report. These five training outcomes are:
 - networks made at Trafford Hall are held and valued long after the course;
 - training helps spread information locally;
 - Trafford Hall catalyses enthusiasm and passion for the subject;
 - Trafford Hall helps generate new ideas for community action;
 - training engages and consequently retains volunteers.

- ✓ Participants highlighted the importance of **training in the current climate**, saying that:
 - changes in legislation make tenant training very important;
 - receiving training from an independent institution allows for greater tenant autonomy to hold landlords to account;
 - Trafford Hall training provides high value for money in times of resource constraint.

Grant Recipient Feedback

Ten grant recipients were interviewed. These interviews focussed specifically on the outcomes this seed funding had in their community. Eight themes emerged showing that:

- ✓ tenants feel there is value in bringing training back to the community as it builds local knowledge, develops resilience and motivates involvement;
- ✓ grants help spread information across the community through training, events, website design or other promotion material;
- ✓ grants give legitimacy to the tenant group by building its public profile and thereby developing local networks ;
- ✓ grants increase local profile and lead to greater tenant participation;
- ✓ grants give tenants the opportunity to secure match funding and other sponsorship;
- ✓ grants provide opportunity to generate new ideas, solutions and further outcomes and events beyond the mandate of the original bid;
- ✓ recipients claim that their project would not have been possible without small seed funding.

Landlord Feedback

Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with social housing providers from around the country. The following eight themes emerged, showing that landlords:

- ✓ receive positive feedback from tenants;
- ✓ believe the quality of Tenant Futures courses is high;
- ✓ feel the programme fees are good value, and were most often happy to cover training and travel expenses as a result;
- ✓ believe in the value of trained tenants to their organisation;
- ✓ feel training catalyses enthusiasm, confidence and better communication skills in their tenants;
- ✓ believe small seed grants promote the outcomes of tenant training locally;
- ✓ acknowledge the benefits of residential training;
- ✓ support tenants by covering travel expenses to Trafford Hall.

Landlords commented that the distance from their organisation to Trafford Hall is often problematic logistically and suggest that housing providers should be more involved in course design and programme development.

Evaluation conclusions

While some benchmarks have yet to be met, the analysis shows that tenants hold the Tenant Futures programme in high regard. Tenants feel the programme motivates them to affect change in their communities, and report the courses to be of high quality. Tenants, landlords, and trainers all believe that residential training helps learning, facilitates networking and gives tenants the opportunity to share good practice. Furthermore, training for tenants receives strong support from the landlords interviewed for this evaluation, as indicated in their willingness to spend an average of £75 per tenant to attend Tenant Futures courses.

By March 2013 the grant programme had *directly* benefited approximately 1282 tenants nationally, and *indirectly* benefited an additional 5180 tenants within 18 months of the programmes initiation. Section VI outlines how small grants have positive outcomes for not only individual social housing tenants, but also landlords and the community.

Recommendations for the Tenant Futures programme

The evaluation outlines six broad recommendations for the Tenant Futures programme.

- ❖ **Continue providing high quality training and accommodation**
The Tenant Futures programme was praised by tenants, landlords and community groups alike for being a high quality training experience. The results of this evaluation support this. It is therefore important that lower levels of available funding and resources over a sustained period of time do not erode these high standards.
- ❖ **Strive to meet benchmarks**
This includes making sure the tenant composition on the programme aligns with national equivalents as much as possible, as well as awarding the number of small grants outlined in the bid. The data collected for this evaluation makes the case for the high impact and potential savings as a result of the small grants. Holding to the grant benchmark of 132 and providing more administrative support to promote grant applications by October 2013 is highly recommended.
- ❖ **Increase administrative capacity** to support tenants in the grant application process
Trafford Hall staff say they have had less capacity than in previous funding periods to follow up with trained tenants and encourage them to apply for grants. Increasing administrative capacity would allow for staff to develop relationships with tenants on training courses and give them opportunities to actively encourage their application. Furthermore, staff could develop best practice examples of how grants have been used in communities and what outcomes they have initiated. This would give tenants in training a clear understanding of the overall potential of the grant programme.
- ❖ **Collect more consistent and detailed data to aid programme evaluation**
The Tenant Futures programme would benefit from a clearer and more detailed system of data collection to monitor the benefits of training and the small grants programme. This means asking administrative staff to make this more of a priority, as well as re-working and standardising many of the tenant feedback systems to provide consistent outputs and qualitative as well as quantitative evidence. Clarity about what specific outcomes should be counted would benefit this exercise.

- ❖ Develop systems to include **landlord and tenant consultations** through the programme
Tenants and landlords were full of ideas about course development and what additional types of training would be useful in the community or for their organisation. Many expressed a desire for the Tenant Futures programme to set up a more formalised consultation scheme where ideas and suggestions for training development would be considered. This process has already been initiated by Trafford Hall, but requires higher levels of administrative support and consequently funding.

- ❖ Secure the appropriate amount of **funding** to sustain the high standard of training
The squeeze in funding and limits in resources available are clearly being felt by tenants, staff and trainers. Core costs such as covering administration functions to ensure that the Tenant Futures programme meets the five recommendations above – maintaining high quality, meeting benchmarks, increasing administrative capacity, improving data, and developing consultation systems – need to be acknowledged and supported financially. There needs to be a discussion of how to raise the level of funding.

II. BACKGROUND

Tenant Futures is a training programme designed specifically to support tenants of social landlords in England involved in tenant panels and other local community groups with the aim of benefiting their community.

Participants and landlords describe the programme as serving two purposes:

- Developing the **soft skills** of social tenants such as report writing, presentation skills, planning and evaluation techniques, working in a group and effectively representing your community
- Providing training on more specific **hard skill sets** such as understanding welfare reform, localism and new housing policies, dealing with anti-social behaviour, learning effective fundraising techniques, designing websites, or learning how to increase energy efficiency

The courses delivered since October 2011 under Tenant Futures are designed to provide skills, knowledge and confidence to social housing tenants involved or wanting to get involved in their communities and aspects of housing management.

Drawing on 15 years of experience in developing and running residential training courses for tenants of social landlords, the NCRC has developed the Tenant Futures programme within a four-pronged framework. Courses have been designed with the following objectives in mind:

- Development and support of the individual
- Strengthening tenant groups
- Encouraging tenant groups to engage in their community
- Understanding policy and management issues.

The courses available through the Tenant Futures programme vary throughout the programme's life to reflect changes in policy context, participant feedback, popularity, trainer recommendations and government focus.

An additional element of Tenant Futures is the **small grants programme** designed to offer seed funding (£1,000 maximum) to tenant organisations that have received training at Trafford Hall and have developed a strategy on how to use that training in their community. Tenants bring what they have learned through their Tenant Futures training back to their communities through a variety of training days, community events, site visits, guest speakers and equipment, which are part-funded through the small grants programme. These grants are intended to spread the benefit of the Tenant Futures learning throughout participants' local communities, and develop local knowledge and networks, win greater local support and recognition for the tenant groups aims, and to kick-start community action.

This evaluation attempts to measure a) the quality of training; b) participants' own assessments of the value of residential training; c) the use of grants and their wider effects; d) the views of landlords on tenant training and the Tenant Futures programme.

About the National Communities Resource Centre at Trafford Hall

The National Communities Resource Centre's driving mission is to offer training and support to all those living and working in low-income communities, to develop their skills, confidence and capacity to better their conditions. Developing local solutions and leadership to extend community capacity and improve housing management lies at the heart of training at the NCRC. The centre's core method is to foster community self-help and resilience through developing targeted action plans with tenants that will deliver results locally.

Residential training lies at the heart of the NCRC's tenant development strategy. The NCRC is housed at Trafford Hall in Chester, a Grade II listed Georgian house set in 14 acres of organically managed gardens. The Centre's seven spacious training rooms, and 53 en-suite bedrooms are part of a non-profit social enterprise.

Two and three day training courses are held at Trafford Hall and residents from low-income communities from across the country travel to Chester to participate. Residential training is said to allow for concentrated focus away from the stresses of everyday life, provide for more time in training than typical local half-day events, and develop networks, relationships and the sharing of best practice among tenants from across the country. It also provides a source of ideas and long-term support.

Cost

The NCRC offers low-cost training to members of low income-communities. Training courses cost 15 pounds and include room and board over the training period. Transport to Trafford Hall is covered by participants, but is often funded through social landlords or can be covered by applying for a travel bursary offered by Trafford Hall. There is also a small fund available for childcare costs when necessary.

III. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Tenant Futures programme has been running since October 1st 2011 and is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This section lists whether benchmarks set out in the funding bid have been met, and identifies who is being trained by the programme. In the 18 months since the launch of the Tenant Futures programme Trafford Hall has met or is close to meeting many of its benchmarks. The original benchmarks were revised upwards following additional funding provided by DCLG in the time period from December 2012 - March 2013.

Table 1. Tenant Futures benchmarks

Performance Indicators	Bid target to 31 March 2013	Additional funding Dec 2012-March 2013	Revised target to 31 March 2013	Actual to 31 March 2013
Numbers of courses	50	6	56	62
Number of tenants trained	1136	120	1256	1241
Proposed tenants new to TH	50%	-	45%	45%
Number of small grants awarded	100	0	100	53

62 courses were held by the end of March 2013, above the revised target of 56. 1241 tenants were trained by the end of March 2013, exceeding the original bid benchmark and only narrowly falling short of the revised benchmark.

By the 31st of March 2013, 556 tenants new to Trafford Hall applied or were recruited to the Tenant Futures programme. Consequently, 45% of the total number of tenants to receive training through Tenant Futures had not been in contact with Trafford Hall before.

By mid-June 2013, 67 grants had been awarded. This brings the total grants awarded closer to the final benchmark of 132 by the end date of the programme. To reach this mark Trafford Hall would need to award an average of 16 grants per month until the end of October 2013.

When asked why this was the case, Trafford Hall staff indicated three reasons that had led to lower levels of grant application by tenants than had been expected:

- some tenant groups have opted to follow up with their landlords or other charitable organisations in their requests for funding;
- Trafford Hall staff had less capacity than in previous funding periods to follow up with trained tenants and encourage them to apply for grants;
- several of the training courses related to personal skill development do not directly translate into larger community projects.

Who is being trained at Trafford Hall?

The following figures show the composition of social housing tenants attending the Tenant Futures programme since October 2011 until March 31st 2013, unless otherwise stated.

Slightly more women attended Tenant Futures courses than men. These numbers do not deviate widely from the national gender split, which was 49% male and 51% female at the time of the last census.

Figure 1. Tenant Futures delegate gender split

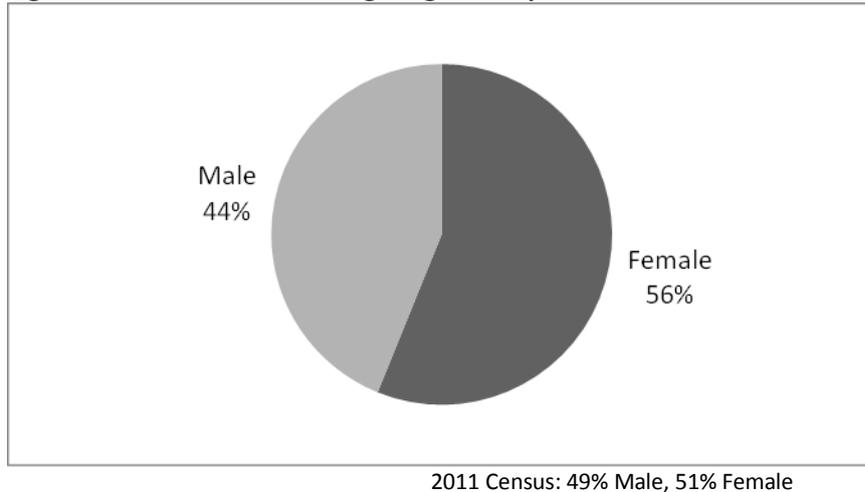


Figure 2 breaks down Tenant Futures delegates by ethnicity, showing that 88% of participants are white, while 12% come from minority backgrounds. This again resembles closely the national breakdown of 86% white, 14% minority during the last census. Recruitment of Asian delegates is quite low at only 1% of the delegate population, as compared to 7.5% nationally.

Figure 2. Tenant Futures delegate ethnicity split

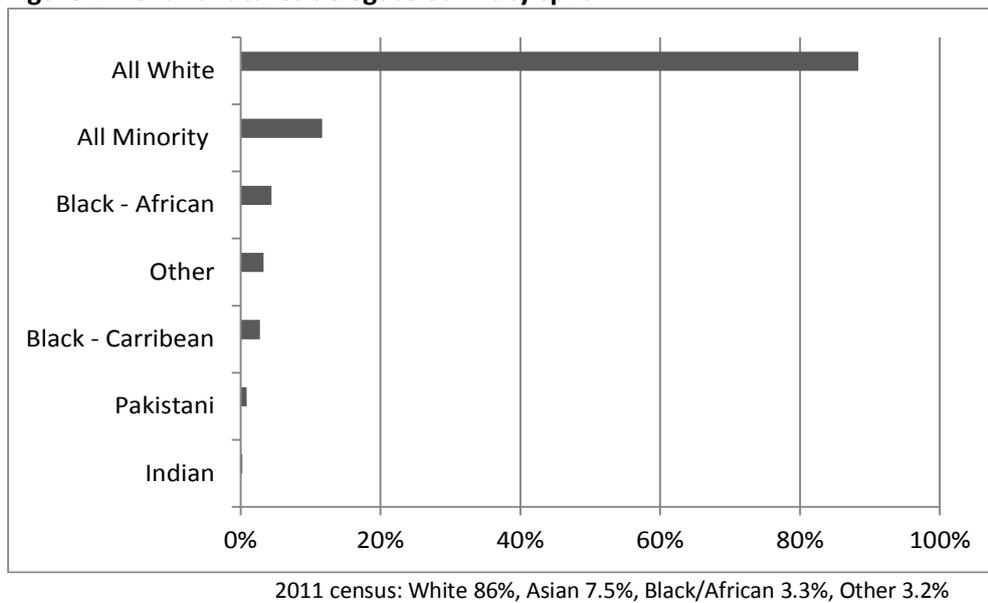
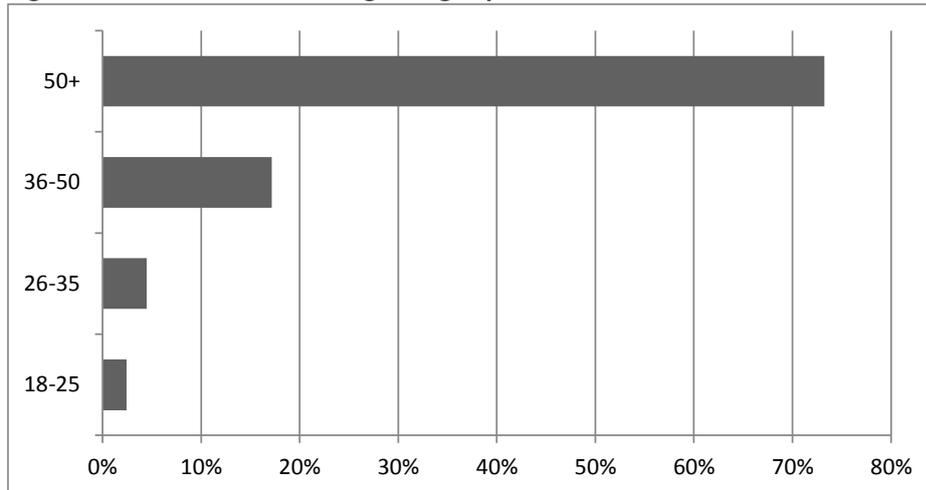


Figure 3 shows the age split of Tenant Futures delegates, which is not in line with a comparable national split.

Figure 3. Tenant Futures delegate age split



While the 51+ data category is very large, the data does reflect a skew towards older tenants participating in the Tenant Futures programme. While this probably reflects the composition of residents generally involved in housing management, an attempt could be made in collaboration with landlords to involve a greater diversity of age groups in training and management.

Finally, Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution of Tenant Futures delegates versus the national regional population distribution at the time of the census.

Figure 4. Tenant distribution by geography as of January 2013



Census 2011: North East 5%, North West 13%, Yorkshire and the Humber 9%, East Midlands 8%, West Midlands 10%, East 10%, South East and London 30%, South West 9%

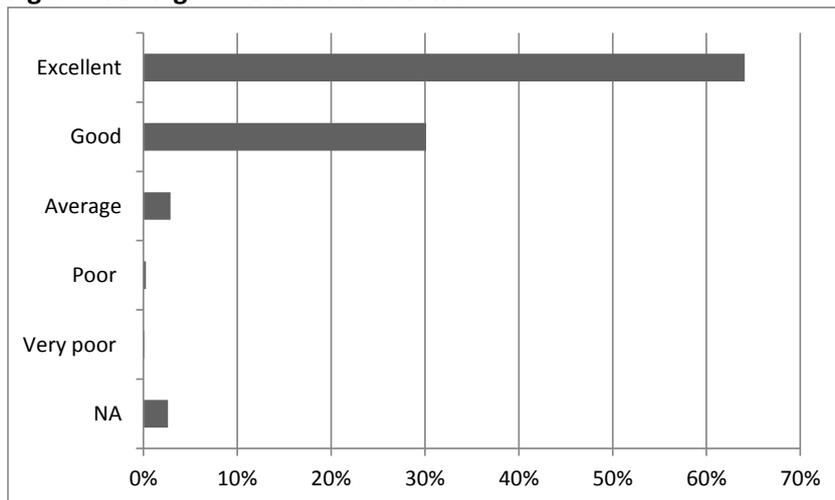
While the South East and London and the North West have the largest population in both splits, these is an over representation of delegates from the North West, possibly due to Trafford Hall's location in that part of the country allowing for easier and cheaper access to the facility. All other regions are within 5% difference of the national regional distribution, with the exception of the South West and London, which is 10% lower than the national distribution.

About Trafford Hall as a venue for training

Tenants seem to be exceedingly satisfied with the quality of catering and accommodation at Trafford Hall. This was also reflected in the tenant survey in which 42 out of 50 tenants praised the high quality of Trafford Hall's facilities and accommodation.

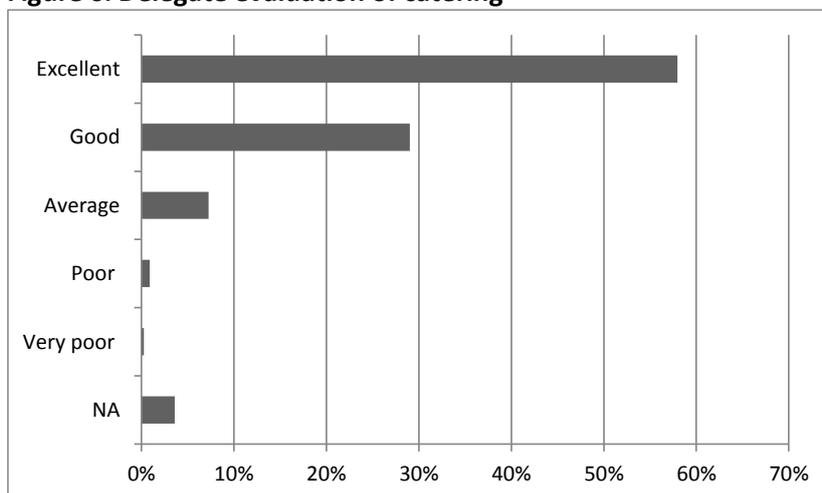
When delegates were asked what they thought of the venue, 64% thought the venue was excellent and 94% of delegates thought Trafford Hall was good or excellent. This is indicated in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Delegate evaluation of venue



There was similar positive response about the quality of catering at Trafford Hall. 58% of delegates thought the standard was excellent, while 87% said the catering was either good or excellent.

Figure 6. Delegate evaluation of catering



Recommendations

- Slightly increase number of male delegates
- Increase number of Asian delegates
- Increase number of delegates under the age of 51
- Continue to encourage an accurate geographic distribution of delegates
- Continue high standards in accommodation and catering

IV. TRAINING EVALUATION

This section is based on 1241 course evaluation filled out by tenants upon completion of the training course. The table below lists 59 courses run by March 28th 2013, the number of tenants trained per course total, and the local outcome that corresponds with each course. The table gives an idea for the range of courses run through the Tenant Futures programme and the level of activity the programme has created.

Table 2. List of 59 training courses held before March 31st 2013

Course Name	Date Held	Tenants per course	Outcomes of training locally
Tenant Scrutiny Advanced	07-09 Nov 11	17	Informed the way residents understood and what to expect of housing management.
Reach out	14-15 Nov 11	24	Outcomes include connecting with difficult to reach community groups.
Tenant Scrutiny-Starter	29 Nov 11	24	Encouraged tenants to get involved in local scrutiny groups and promote scrutiny among the wider community.
Consulting Your Community	01-02 Dec 11	19	Tenants undertake consultation with their local community around tenancy issues.
Group Dynamics	16-17 Jan 12	27	Tenants learn to make changes in order to become more effective as a group.
Tenant Inspectors	23-28 Jan 12	15	Tenants undertake full tenant inspector training and become part of the inspection team locally
Working with your Landlords	02-03 Feb 12	24	Tenants have a better understanding of how to effectively engage with their landlords leading to better relationships.
Spreading your knowledge and understanding	20-22 Feb 12	17	Tenants improve how they spread their own knowledge locally.
Planning monitoring and evaluating	23-24 Feb 12	18	Tenants have a clearer understanding of how they can evaluate and monitor their own work.
ASB	27-29 Feb 12	26	Tenants learn how they can tackle specific ASB issues in their own local community and action-plan useful projects.
Committee Skills	12-14 Mar 12	17	Tenants have a clearer understanding of the roles of different members of their committee.
Representing your Community	19-20 Mar 12	12	Tenants learn how they can represent their own communities to their landlords, to the media, to other organisations.
Tenants on the Web	26-28 Mar 12	17	Tenants leave with a web presence, understand how to use Twitter and Facebook and other social media and become more 'visible' in their local community.
Wider World	17-18 Jan 12	23	Tenants are informed about housing policy and welfare reform and learn how to spread this information to local people.
Wider World	26-27 Jan 12	21	See above
Tenant panels	14-15 Mar 12	22	This course explains the potential for tenant panels. Tenants left with clear action-plans to take ideas forward in their community.
Wider World	13-14 Feb 12	23	See above
Wider World	28-29 Mar 12	25	See above

Wider World	17-19 May 12	23	See above
Tenant Control	18-20 May 12	23	Tenants found about TMOs and TMO structure.
Tenant Panels	23-24 May 12	13	See above
Robust Frameworks	13-16 Jun 12	21	Tenants learned from best practice and to action-plan for improved work with their landlord.
Local resolution of complaints	19-20 Jun 12	25	Tenants considered the changes being made to Complaint Resolution and to set up their own local Complaints Panels.
Understanding Your Community	28-29 Jun 12	20	Tenants 'mapped' their own communities to understand its composition and how to connect with hard to reach groups.
Working with your Landlord	02-03 Jul 12	23	See above
Tenant Scrutiny	01-03 Aug 12	19	See above
Consulting the Community	06-07 Aug 12	25	See above
An Inspector Calls	20-22 Aug 12	20	See above
Making Meetings Work for You	30-31 Aug 12	17	Tenants learned to be more effective in meetings, on their local panel, with their landlord, or with other groups or agencies.
Scrutiny – Deeper Involvement	10-12 Sep 12	23	This course enabled groups already involved in Scrutiny to learn from best practice, and to consider structural changes that could make them more effective.
Improving repairs	18-19 Sep 12	21	This course enabled Tenant Panels involved in repairs to learn best practice from other organisations.
Avoiding Burnout	24-26 Sep 12	21	Tenants were encouraged to consider how they would be more effective both for themselves and their own community without over committing.
Your Panel Your Community	10-11 Oct 12	11	Tenants considered how their Panel could relate to local people and how they could improve their 'image' locally.
Robust Frameworks	15-17 Oct 12	21	See above
Wider World	18-19 Oct 12	28	See above
Understanding Performance Information	22-23 Oct 12	18	Groups attending this course went away understanding how to read landlord produced performance information, charts and figures, enabling them to be more effective in meetings and decision making.
Local resolution of Complaints	01-02 Nov 12	21	See above
Opportunities for involvement	15-16 Nov 12	14	The second version of Tenant Panels (see above), introducing residents to ways they could get involved with panels locally.
Tenants on the Web	26-28 Nov 12	11	See above
Group Structures and Mergers	03-05 Dec 12	17	Specifically for tenants facing a merger. Tenants express their concerns and learned from best practice.
All on Board	27-28 Mar 13	15	This course enabled individuals to think about what their role as a board member was and whether they were using it effectively.

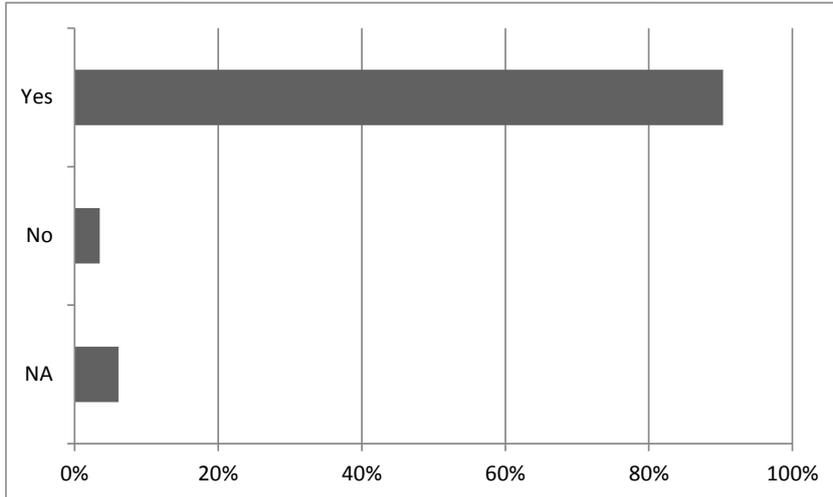
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating	27-28 Mar 13	23	See above
Understanding Group Dynamics	22-23 Mar 13	10	See above
An Inspector Calls	21-23 Jan 13	10	See above
Wider World	24-25 Jan 13	18	See above
Fundraising Strategy	28-30 Jan 13	16	Tenants were given clear ways of organising a fundraising strategy in order to build their independence.
ASB	11-13 Feb 13	15	See above
Diverse Representation	14-15 Feb 13	17	Tenants developed action-plans for improving involvement of hard to reach groups.
Tenant Scrutiny	18-20 Feb 13	16	See above
Representing your Community	07-08 Mar 13	24	See above
Committee Skills	04-06 Feb 13	14	See above
Scrutiny-Deeper Involvement	25-27 Mar 13	18	See above
Wider World	09-10 Feb 13	17	See above
Local Resolution of Complaints	15-16 Feb 13	16	See above
Recruiting for Tenant scrutiny Panels	02-03 Mar 13	12	Panels were given clear ideas of how to encourage local people to get involved.
Practical Skills for Tenant Scrutiny and Inspection	13-15 Mar 13	14	This course promoted three skills – interview skills, report writing skills and presentation skills.
Localism, what does it mean?	15-16 Mar 13	17	Tenants were introduced to localism, the issues it affects, and how they can use and promote localism in their own communities.
Scrutiny	18-20 Mar 13	18	See above
Local Support Services Framework	09-10 Mar 13	14	This was a consultation event around the LSSF relating to the changes to benefits. The groups who attended produced a response to the consultation which was sent on to Lord Freud and taken account of within the final report.

Evaluating the courses

All 1241 delegates filled out a training evaluation form following the course. Figures 7 - 12 outline the quantitative outcomes of these evaluations.

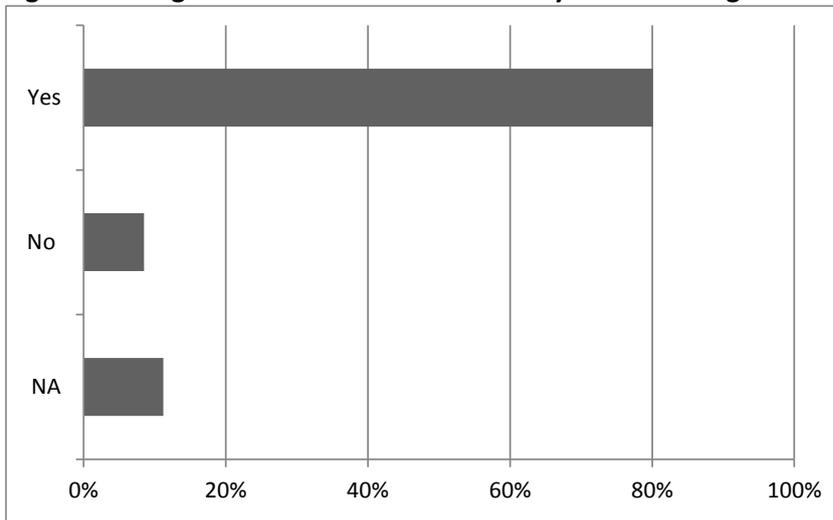
The course evaluation begins by asking delegates whether the course has given them new ideas. 90% of tenants confirmed that this was the case with only 3% stating no, as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Delegate evaluation of whether the course gave them new ideas



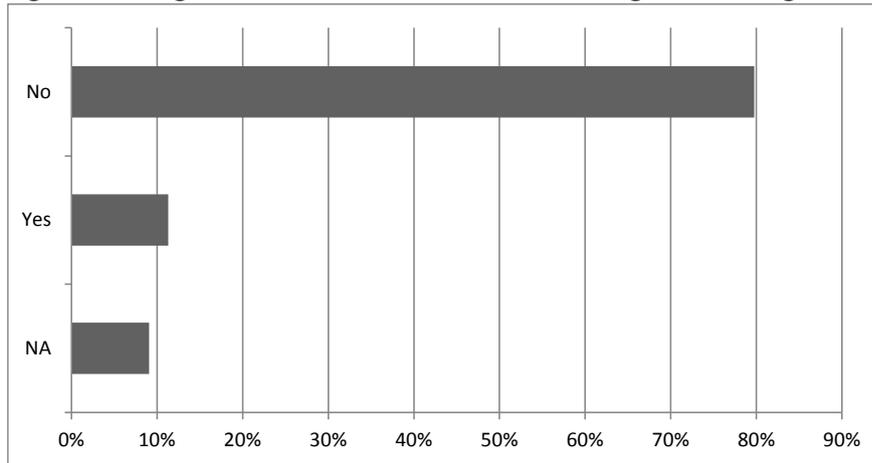
The evaluation also asked whether the course had encouraged the delegate to take forward an existing idea. 80% of delegates confirmed that the course had encouraged and motivated them to move forward on an idea, while only 9% said it had not.

Figure 8. Delegate evaluation of whether they feel encouraged to take forward an idea



Furthermore, 80% of delegates claimed that they did not leave the training feeling there was something missing. The 11% who said they did want something they didn't get from the course, often cited the course not being advanced enough, or IT facilities being disappointing in courses such as *Tenants on the Web*.

Figure 9. Delegate evaluation of whether something was missing from the course

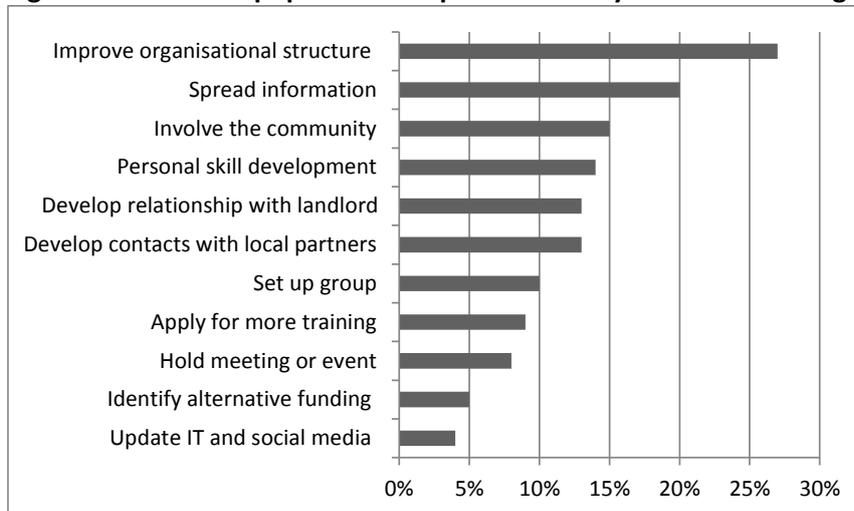


Delegates were asked to outline three action points that they felt they would take forward in their communities as a consequence of training. The top three training action points are:

- improving the organisational structure of a tenant panel or group, or the structure of their housing association more generally;
- spreading the information they had learnt in the training more widely; and
- involving the community.

Other delegates believed that their tenant panel or group would benefit due to the personal skills they had developed through the Tenant Futures programme, while others returned to their communities eager to forge better relationships with their landlord and community partners.

Figure 10. The most popular action points listed by tenants following training courses.



In answering the question how satisfied they were with the course, all but one course out of 64 received over 50% approval rating, with 38% receiving over 90% approval rating. According to the evaluation document, the course Diverse Representation received a low approval rating due to the disruption of the course by a difficult group of delegates. Table 3 presents the same information in table form. The high level of delegate satisfaction is displayed in more detail.

Figure 11. Breakdown of delegate satisfaction with the overall training experience

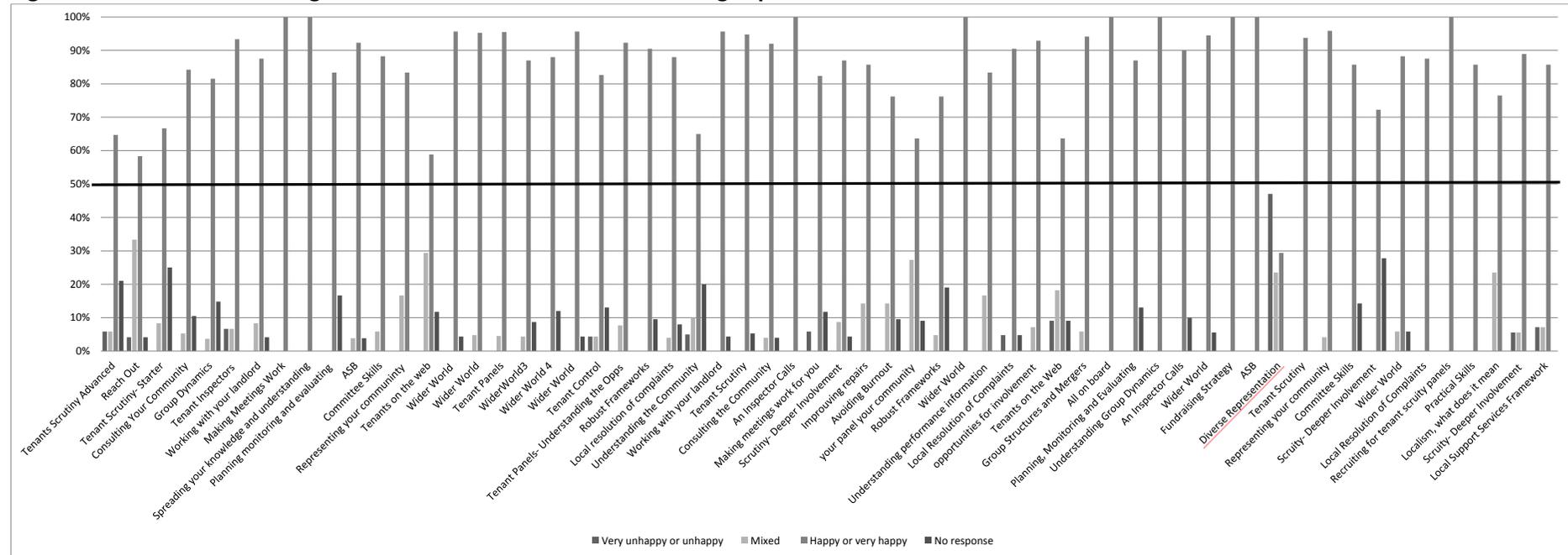


Table 3. Breakdown of delegate satisfaction with the overall training experience (%)

Title of course	Un-happy	Mixed	Happy	NA	Title of course	Un-happy	Mixed	Happy	NA
Tenants Scrutiny Advanced	6	6	65	21	Your Panel your Community	0	27	64	9
Reach Out	4	33	58	4	Robust Frameworks	0	5	76	19
Tenant Scrutiny- Starter	0	8	67	25	Wider World	0	0	100	0
Consulting Your Community	0	5	84	11	Understanding performance Information	0	17	83	0
Group Dynamics	0	4	81	15	Local Resolution of Complaints	5	0	90	5
Tenant Inspectors	7	7	93	0	Opportunities for Involvement	0	7	93	0
Working with your Landlord	0	8	88	4	Tenants on the Web	9	18	64	9
Making Meetings Work	0	0	100	0	Group Structures and Mergers	0	6	94	0
Spreading your Knowledge and Understanding	0	0	100	0	All on Board	0	0	100	0
Planning Monitoring and Evaluating	0	0	83	17	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating	0	0	87	13
ASB	0	4	92	4	Understanding Group Dynamics	0	0	100	0
Committee Skills	0	6	88	0	An Inspector Calls	0	0	90	10
Representing your Community	0	17	83	0	Wider World	0	0	94	6
Tenants on the web	0	29	59	12	Fundraising Strategy	0	0	100	0
Wider World	0	0	96	4	ASB	0	0	100	0
Wider World	0	5	95	0	Diverse Representation	47	24	29	0
Tenant Panels	0	5	95	0	Tenant Scrutiny	0	0	94	0
Wider World	0	4	87	9	Representing your Community	0	4	96	0
Wider World	0	0	88	12	Committee Skills	0	0	86	14
Wider World	0	0	96	4	Scrutiny- Deeper Involvement	0	0	72	28
Tenant Control	4	4	83	13	Wider World	0	6	88	6
Tenant Panels	0	8	92	0	Local Resolution of Complaints	0	0	88	0
Robust Frameworks	0	0	90	10	Recruiting for Tenant Scrutiny Panels	0	0	100	0
Local Resolution of Complaints	0	4	88	8	Practical Skills	0	0	86	0
Understanding the Community	5	10	65	20	Localism, what does it mean	0	24	76	0
Working with your Landlord	0	0	96	4	Scrutiny- Deeper Involvement	6	6	89	0
Tenant Scrutiny	0	0	95	5	Local Support Services Framework	7	7	86	0
Consulting the Community	0	4	92	4	Avoiding Burnout	0	14	76	10
An Inspector Calls	0	0	100	0	Scrutiny- Deeper Involvement	0	9	87	4
Making Meetings Work for You	6	0	82	12	Improving Repairs	0	14	86	0

The final questions of the evaluation asks tenants whether they thought the level of the course had been suitable. All courses received 50% or higher satisfaction with the level of the course, and 32% of courses were rated at over 90% satisfaction with the level of the course. This information is once again given in table form (Table 4) to illustrate delegate responses in greater detail

Figure 12. Breakdown of delegate satisfaction about the level of the course

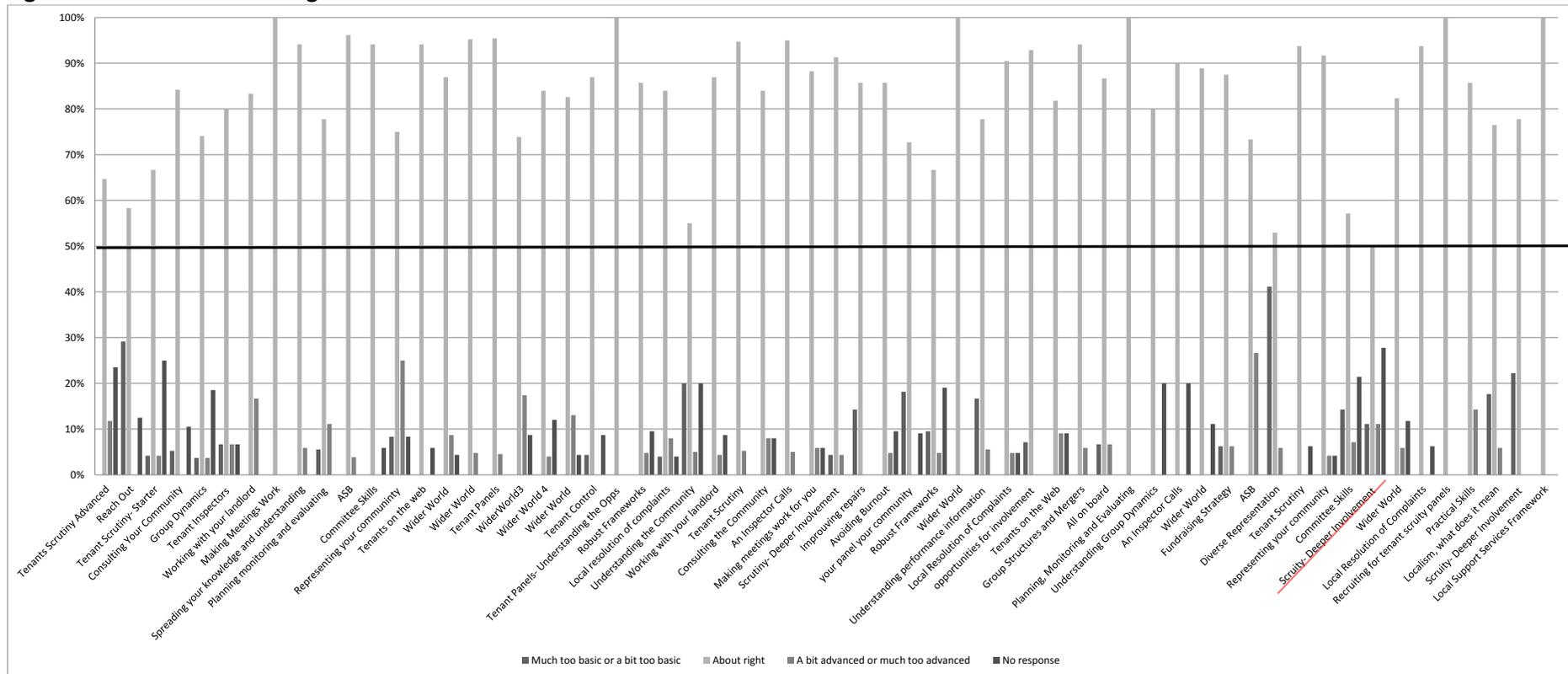
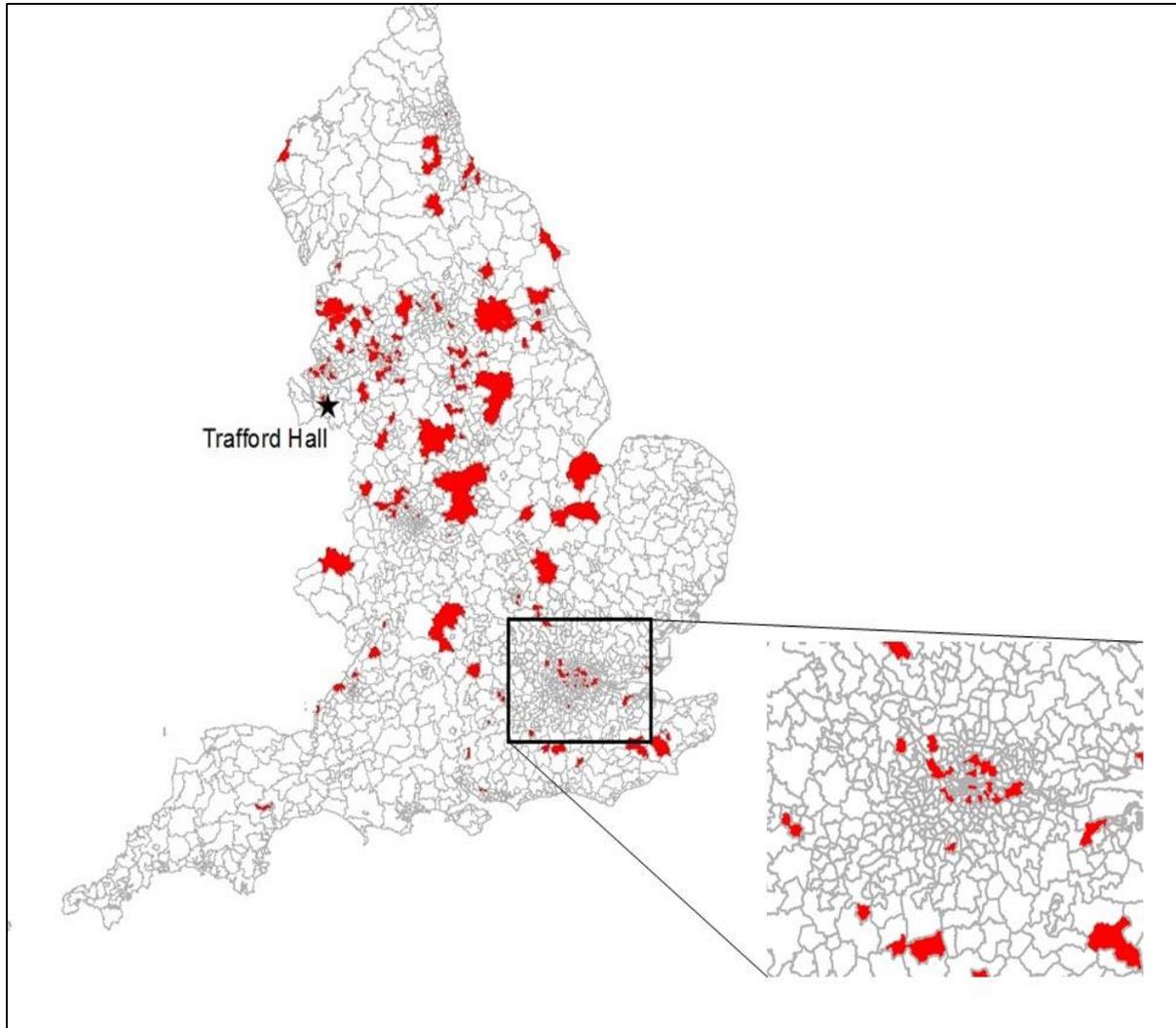


Table 4. Breakdown of delegate satisfaction about the level of the course (%)

Title	About right	Too advanced	Too basic	NA	Title	About right	Too advanced	Too basic	NA
Tenants Scrutiny Advanced	65	12	0	24	Understanding the Community	55	5	20	20
Reach Out	58	0	29	13	Working with your Landlord	87	4	0	9
Tenant Scrutiny-Starter	67	4	4	25	Tenant Scrutiny	95	5	0	0
Consulting Your Community	84	0	5	11	Consulting the Community	84	8	0	8
Group Dynamics	74	4	4	19	An Inspector Calls	95	5	0	0
Tenant Inspectors	80	7	7	7	Making Meetings Work For You	88	6	0	6
Working with Your Landlord	83	17	0	0	Scrutiny- Deeper Involvement	91	4	4	0
Making Meetings Work	100	0	0	0	Improving Repairs	86	0	14	0
Spreading your Knowledge and Understanding	94	6	0	0	Avoiding Burnout	86	5	0	10
Planning Monitoring and Evaluating	78	11	6	0	Your Panel your Community	73	0	18	9
ASB	96	4	0	0	Robust Frameworks	67	5	10	19
Committee Skills	94	0	0	6	Wider World	100	0	0	0
Representing your Community	75	25	8	8	Performance Information	78	6	17	0
Tenants on the Web	94	0	0	6	Local Resolution of Complaints	90	5	0	5
Wider World	87	9	0	4	Opportunities for involvement	93	0	7	0
Wider World	95	5	0	0	Tenants on the Web	82	9	0	9
Tenant Panels	95	5	0	0	Group Structures and Mergers	94	6	0	0
Wider World	74	17	0	9	All on Board	87	7	7	0
Wider World	84	4	0	12	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating	100	0	0	0
Wider World	83	13	0	4	Understanding Group Dynamics	80	0	0	20
Tenant Control	87	0	4	9	An Inspector Calls	90	0	0	20
Tenant Panels	100	0	0	0	Wider World	89	0	0	11
Robust Frameworks	86	5	0	10	Fundraising Strategy	88	6	6	0
Local Resolution of Complaints	84	8	4	4	ASB	73	27	0	0
Diverse Representation	53	6	41	0	Local Resolution of Complaints	94	0	0	6
Tenant Scrutiny	94	0	0	6	Recruiting for Tenant Scrutiny Panels	100	0	0	0
Representing your Community	92	4	0	4	Practical Skills	86	14	0	0
Committee Skills	57	7	14	21	Localism, what does it mean	76	6	18	0
Scrutiny- Deeper Involvement	50	11	11	28	Scrutiny- Deeper Involvement	78	0	22	0
Wider World	82	6	0	12	Local Support Services Framework	100	0	0	0

The map below gives a visual indication of the geographic reach of the Tenant Futures programme. Postcodes were colour coded from a random sample of 800 delegates. While the East and South West are under-represented, possibly due to poor transportation options, the general distribution is satisfactory.

Map 1. Where Trafford Hall delegates are from (Sample of 800)



Finally, while no benchmark was set for the number of trainers to be drawn from Trafford Halls' Trainers Network, 63% of all Tenant Futures courses are run by two training groups. All courses go out for tender and bids are evaluated by the Trainers Network, which includes social housing tenants, before the best training bid is selected for the programme. While this method of contracting trainers is fair and is delivering high levels of tenant satisfaction, it may be worth considering the benefits and drawbacks of diversifying trainers.

Recommendations

- Update and re-word the Tenant Futures course evaluation to get a more accurate and nuanced picture of delegates' opinions
- Continue high quality of training
- Consider the benefits and drawbacks of diversifying programme trainers more

V. GRANT EVIDENCE

An important element of Tenant Futures is the **small grants programme** designed to offer small-seed funding (maximum £1,000/project) to tenant organisations that have received training at Trafford Hall and have developed an action plan on how to apply that training in their community. Tenants bring their Tenant Futures training back to their communities through a variety of training days, events, site visits, guest speakers and equipment funded by the small grants programme. Grants are intended to spread the benefit of the Tenant Futures learning throughout the recipients local community, and develop local knowledge, networks, win greater local support and recognition and to kick-start community action.

Tenants are introduced to the grant programme at the end of every Tenant Futures training course. Interested tenants are required to submit a detailed application defending the grant's purpose and its connection to the training they received at Trafford Hall. Once funding is given, all grant recipients are required to submit summary reports showing how their grant was used and detailing the outcomes of each project. A list of the projects receiving funding before March 31st 2013 appears below.

10 grant recipients were extensively interviewed in addition to submitting their summary reports. These interviews focussed specifically on the outcomes this seed funding had in their community, the numbers of tenants that had been directly or indirectly affected by the grant, and further descriptive outcomes of the funding, which are illustrated in more detail in section VI's social impact case-studies. The following paragraph develops a list of extrapolated grant outcomes based on the qualitative interview data.

Tenant Futures grant outcomes:

- ✓ By the end of March 2013, 37 groups in receipt of grants and submitted monitoring reports listing numbers of tenants that had directly benefited from the grant.
- ✓ Based on these monitoring reports, 1282 tenants had directly benefited from 37 grants.
- ✓ This is an average of **35 tenants directly benefiting from every grant.**
- ✓ In-depth interviews conducted with 10 grant recipients identified that tenants report that an average of 4 tenants indirectly benefit from every tenant that directly benefits for the grant. For example, for every one tenant that receives training on welfare reform, 4 other tenants received information or advice from this tenant.
- ✓ Consequently, in addition to the 1282 tenants that have directly benefited from 37 grants, an additional 5180 $((35*4)*37)$ tenants indirectly benefited, totalling 6462 directly or indirectly benefiting from 37 grants.
- ✓ **This averages to 175 tenants directly or indirectly benefiting from every Tenant Futures programme grant.**
- ✓ £21,076 was spent on 37 grants. Consequently, **the average grant given by Tenant Futures programme by the end of March 2013 runs at £570.**
- ✓ Consequently, **£16 is spent on every tenant directly benefiting from a grant.**
- ✓ Furthermore, **£3.30 is spent on every tenant directly or indirectly benefiting from a grant.**

Table 5 lists the grants issued before March 31st 2013, with the direct and indirect outcomes initiated in local communities due to Tenant Futures funding.

Table 5. List of Tenant Futures grants issues by March 31st and associated benefits

GRANT GROUP	COURSE	£	TYPE OF GRANT	DESCRIPTION	WHAT TYPE OF BENEFIT?	
					Direct	Indirect
North West						
Arcon Tenant Scrutiny Committee	Improving repairs	500	Training	Training on complaint handling, designated persons and tenant panels.	16 Tenants directly benefited from training	Better representation and service delivery for tenants and landlord
Bedford Road NRC, Rockferry	Reach Out	360	Event	Community open day to promote the work of the group and to encourage additional volunteers.	130 Tenants attended the open day	Community outreach
Bideford Community Centre	Improving repairs	400	IT	One laptop to enable development of IT skills and spread information on benefit changes.	100 Tenants directly benefited from access to IT	Higher numbers of tenants reached online
Coverdale and New Bank Association	ASB	420	Event	One-off event for young people in the community, to inform them on issues around ASB.	30 Young tenant directly benefited from being more informed and involved in the community	Lower levels of ASB - benefits for the community and landlord
Everton Neighbourhood Panel	Robust Frameworks	500	IT	Laptop and programme to enable development of website, production of newsletters and assistance to local residents.	13 Tenants directly benefit from improved computer literacy	Increased information via newsletters and website
Helping the Homeless into Housing	Tenants on the Web	609	IT	Two laptops and MSWord software to enable more effective communication and net presence.	6 Tenants directly benefit from improved computer literacy	Increasing information online
Lancashire Forum and Lilac Forum	Tenant Panels	998	IT	Laptops and special programmes for people with disabilities to enable greater involvement.	4 Tenants with disabilities able to participate in the management of their housing	More active residents through increased involvement and diverse representation
Lee Valley Neighbourhood and Scrutiny Board	Working with your landlord	650	Training	Scrutiny training for resident board members.	16 Tenants improve their monitoring and reporting skills.	Improved housing services
New Bagueley TARA	Wider World	500	Outreach	Gazebo and equipment to promote the TARA and encourage more local involvement at events.	15 New tenants come to meetings every month because they are aware of the TARA	Community forum to resolve problems
Oldham Drive Estate Tenants Group	Reach Out	500	Outreach	Community Sign Board to be used to promote tenancy issues, meetings, information, etc.	30 Tenants living on the estate are more informed about local issues and events	More active residents through increased involvement and diverse representation
Regional Residents Forum	Tenant Panels	500	Visit	Visit to neighbouring housing association to find out how they manage and deliver their panels.	14 Forum members develop a deeper understanding of how best to run tenant panels.	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord

Resident and Tenant Forum, Chorley Community Housing	Tenant Scrutiny Starting Up	550	Event	Open event on Localism Bill and promotion of Forum and their work.	150 Tenants learn more about localism and are exposed to the work of the residents forum	Community more informed about local policy and how they can get involved
Salix Homes People's Panel	Robust Frameworks	750	Training	Two grants to cover training on the new regulatory framework for social housing.	23 Tenants receive in depth training on new social housing regulatory framework	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Salix Homes People's Panel	Robust Frameworks	700	Training	Same as above	Same as above	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Weaver Vale Housing Trust Tenant Consultative Committee	Avoiding Burnout	798	Training	Training about co-regulation and welfare reform, for members of the tenant consultative committee.	28 Local tenants have in-depth knowledge of welfare reform and co-regulation	Information on welfare reform spreads through community
Wirral Partnership Homes Advisory and Scrutiny Panel	Wider World	500	Training	Training on benefit reforms and Localism Bill.	In progress	Information on welfare reform and localism spreads through community
North East						
Coast and Country Tenants Panel	Wider World	350	Training	Training day by tenants for tenants on Localism Bill and welfare reform	17 Tenants have in-depth understanding of welfare reforms	Information on welfare reform and localism spreads through community
Coast and Country Tenants Panel, Middlesbrough	Wider World	350	Event	One day event to promote the upcoming changes on welfare reform and provide informational leaflets.	17 Tenants have in-depth understanding of welfare reforms	Information on welfare reform spreads through community
County Durham Residents Association	Wider World	1,500	Training	Two training sessions on welfare reform and tenant control.	140 Tenants have in-depth understanding of welfare reforms	Information on welfare reform and tenant control spreads through community
Tenants Panel, Livin	Inspector Calls	500	Training	Training on developing tenant inspectors	12 Tenants are trained to be tenant inspectors	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Housing Hartlepool Tenant Consultation	Tenant Panels	715	Training	One-day training event on options for tenant panels.	36 Tenants have in-depth understanding of tenant panels	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Wear Valley Customer Panel	Wider World	500	Training	Training session looking at new housing reform.	41 Tenants have in-depth understanding of new housing reforms	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Yorks and Humber						
Billing View Community Group	Spreading Your Knowledge	500	Outreach	Production of CDs for those with sight difficulties, production of newsletter to inform older residents with sight difficulties on tenancy issues.	53 Elderly tenants directly benefited from receiving newsletter	More active community through increased involvement and diverse representation

East Riding Tenants Participation Forum	Wider World	255	Visit	Visit to a neighbouring housing association to see their scrutiny panel at work.	24 Tenants learn best practice from other tenants	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Rotherham Federation of Tenants and Residents	Local Resolution of Complaints	485	Event	Consultation exercise plus one-day workshop to discuss the feasibility of setting up a Designated Tenant Panel.	23 Tenants learn best practice on how to set up their own tenant panel	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Tenant Scrutiny Executive WNW Homes	Scrutiny Deeper Involvement	201	Outreach	Purchase of camera for scrutiny reports.	8 Tenants are better able to perform scrutiny tasks	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Theaker Lane Tenants Group	Tenants on Web	500	IT	Purchase of a laptop for production of minutes, administration, production of newsletter etc.	40 Tenants benefit from exposure to IT equipment and better organisation of the tenant group	Information on welfare reform spreads through community Opportunity for IT training
West Midlands						
Washington Close Residents Association	Tenants on the Web	550	IT	Laptop to develop website and recording equipment to record information and events for housebound residents.	60 Tenants on the estate benefit from website, recording equipment and exposure to IT	More active community through increased involvement and diverse representation
Washington Close Residents Association	Mergers	255	Visit	Visit to meet residents association of merging landlord.	30 Tenants reassured by change in organisational structure	Lower levels of tension in community and for landlord
East Midlands						
Federation of N E Derbyshire Tenants and Residents	Wider World	500	Training	Event to bring tenants and residents from NE Derbyshire together to offer training on both the Localism Act and the Welfare Reform issues.	60 Tenant have in-depth understanding of localism and welfare reform	Information on welfare and localism spreads throughout the community
Tenant Advisory Panel, Hinckley and Bosworth	Working with Your Landlord	500	IT	Purchase of a laptop and printer to enable production of peer-training documents, and promotional material for the group.	15 Tenants benefit from exposure to IT and promotion of their group	Information spreads through the community
Tenant Forum Executive Committee	Consulting the community	500	IT	Purchase of laptop and software to enable consultation materials to be produced.	In progress	
East						
Rural North TARA	Scrutiny - Getting Involved	910	Training	Scrutiny training for committee members and other interested tenants.	In progress	
London						
Holland Rise and Whitebeam Close TMO	Consulting the community	600	Outreach	Purchase of banners for publicity purposes.	In progress	
Hornsey Lane Estate Management Board	Board Membership	828	Training	Training on working as a committee.	In progress	
Islington Community Project	Working with Your Landlord	500	Training	Training on Tenant Panels and the Localism Bill, to enable local	40 Tenants have in-depth understanding of tenant panels and are	Information on policy changes spreads and services improve

				residents to train other tenants locally.	able to train other tenants	through strengthened tenant panel
Islington Community Project	Scrutiny	500	Training	Training on scrutiny for local tenants.	10 Tenants have in-depth knowledge on best practice relating to scrutiny	Better service delivery for tenants and landlord
Shanklin Village Residents Democracy	Tenants on the Web	500	IT	Laptop to enable development of website, facebook and twitter pages to encourage local involvement.	In progress	
South West						
Bristol Community Housing Tenant Involvement Group	Wider World	500	Event	One day event to promote the upcoming changes on Welfare Reform.	35 Tenants understand the welfare reforms	Information spreads throughout the community
Pride of Place	ASB	500	Event	Working with twelve local young people on community safety.	12 Young people receive training and community recognition	Community benefits from and improved living environment and lower ASB
South East						
Ashford Borough Tenant Panel	Tenant Scrutiny Starting Up	680	Training	Training taster sessions for tenant scrutiny panel with the aim of increasing panel members.	40 Tenants learn about tenant scrutiny and best practice	Better representation and service delivery for tenants
Customer Scrutiny Panel, MHS Homes	Wider World	600	Training	One day event to promote the upcoming changes on welfare reform.	18 Tenants understand the welfare reforms	Information spreads throughout the community
Lower Kingshill Management Cooperative	Understanding Your community	500	Event	Local event to introduce local management agreements.	In progress	
MHS Homes Customer Scrutiny Panel	Working with Your Landlord	1,200	Training	Two separate days training on welfare and regulatory reform.	In progress	
SOHA Tenant Inspectors	Understanding Group Dynamics	500	Training	Training on understanding group dynamics for local inspectors group.	23 Tenants develop skills on how to work effectively as a team	More efficient running of tenant inspectors group leads to better service delivery
SOHA Tenant Inspectors and Tenant Forum	Wider World	900	Training	Training on changes to regulation of social housing and welfare changes.	23 Tenants have in-depth understanding of the regulation changes and the welfare reforms	Information spreads through the community
Waverley Tenants Panel	Working with your landlord	1,000	IT and Event	Awareness days in four areas, plus laptop/printer for presentation and production of leaflets/information in order to promote group.	In progress	
Totals:	21,076 spent on 37 completed grants				1282 directly impacted out 37 completed grants	

The aim of the grants could roughly be broken down into five categories:

- grants for follow on training, often set in the tenant’s community and drawing on trainers used by the Tenant Futures programme;
- IT grants to develop tenant panel websites, engage with social media, improve computer literacy or develop promotional material;
- grants for local events often to spread information gained during training, to engage the community and to connect with local partners;
- grants to aid outreach such as gazebos, noticeboards and banners to increase the visibility of the panel;
- grants for tenants to visit tenants of other housing associations to learn from best practice or prepare for mergers.

Figure 13 shows how these grants have been distributed across the five grant categories.

Figure 13. Tenant Futures Small Grants Programme: How is the grant used?

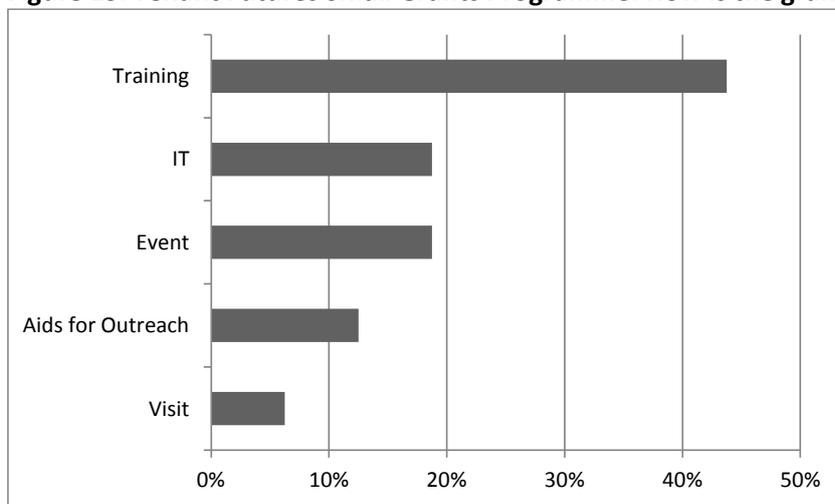


Figure 14 breaks down grants awarded by region. Again the North West is highest on the distribution, possibly due to Trafford Hall’s location.

Figure 14. Tenant Futures Seed Grants Programme: Where are they going?

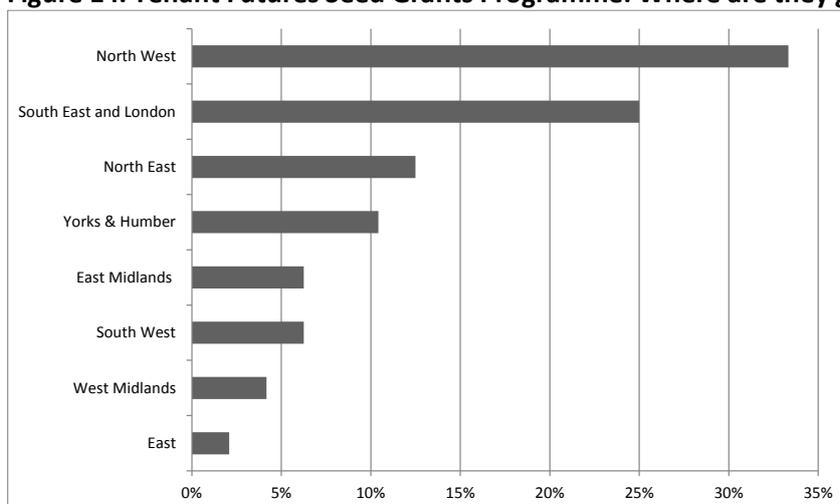
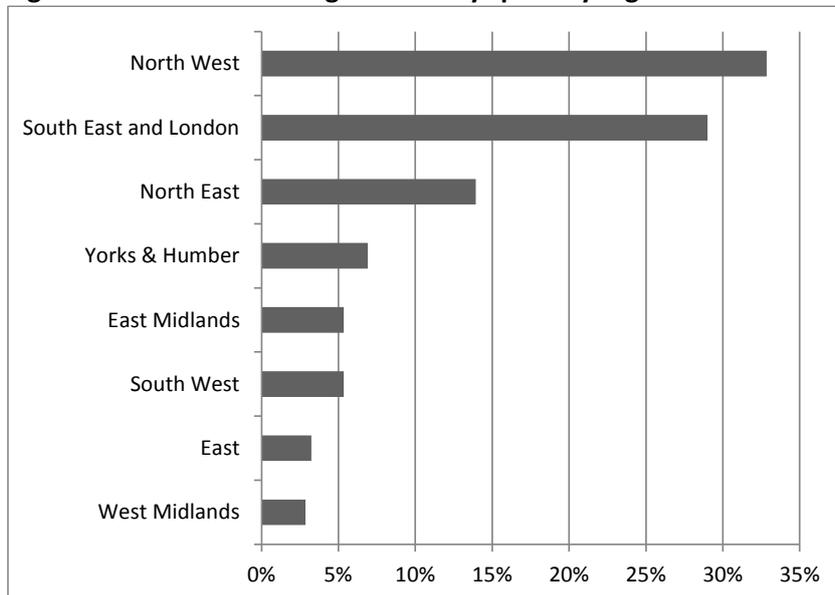


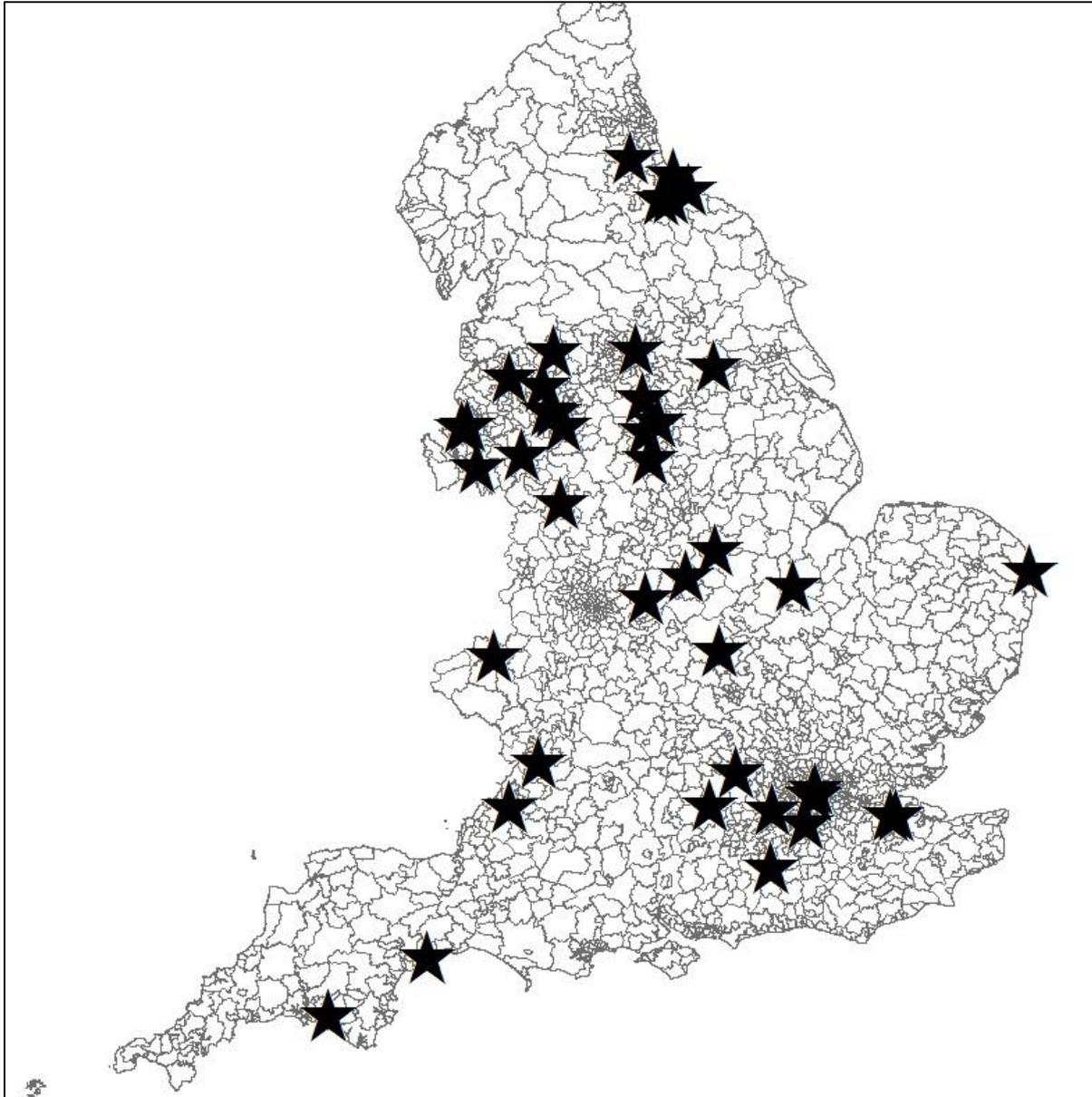
Figure 15 shows a similar regional breakdown, but splits the grants by percentage of money spent by region. Here the North West and South East and London move closer together, but the chart is

generally the same as the breakdown by number of grants, showing that the level of grant funding awarded does not differ much between regions. Map 2 gives an idea of where the first 37 Tenant Futures grants have been awarded.

Figure 15. Tenant Futures grant money spent by region



Map 2. Where Trafford Hall grants are being awarded



Recommendations

- More strategically outline standard monitoring questions for grant recipients. For example, knowing who benefited from the grant, how many people benefited from the grant, what outcomes followed as a consequence, how many community groups were involved etc. would be useful information to document.
- Provide tenants in training with best practice examples of how grants have been used in communities and what outcomes they have initiated. This would give tenants a big picture understanding of the overall aim of the small grant programme.
- Consider within the overarching goals of the Tenant Futures programme what the five categories of grant – training, event, IT, outreach and visit – should achieve and communicate this clearly with the tendering group.
- Encourage more tenants from geographic regions outside of the North West to apply.

VI. GRANT IMPACT CASE STUDIES

The objective of the Tenant Futures programme is to offer training and support to tackle housing-related problems for people living and working in low-income areas. The training programme gives residents the skills to sit on panels and organise events to resolve local problems such as anti-social behaviour, repairs, estate management and how to adjust to welfare reform.

In order to measure whether the programme is having the desired outcome in local communities, five case studies have been developed around the five different types of grants awarded to groups – grants for training, events, IT, visits, and outreach equipment. These case studies were developed based on five in-depth interviews with key contacts in each organisation.

To provide evidence for social return on investment, outputs are measured and the outcomes of different stakeholders identified. While monetising social value is tricky without sophisticated longitudinal research, in this case requiring additional funding, a range of soft and hard outcomes can be identified and potential savings listed for the individual, community and landlord, who all stand to benefit from Tenant Futures training and the small grants programme.

The small grant case studies have been broken down into four main elements to measure social value:

- **Inputs** – the resource that you need to make something happened
- **Outputs** – the direct result of the programme goal
- **Outcomes** – the change that has occurred over the longer term
- **Impacts** – the outcomes less and estimate of what would have happened anyway

This breakdown is then followed up by an estimate of the potential savings generated for the individual, community and the landlord as a consequence of the small grant.

Case Study 1: Grant for training – County Durham Residents Association (CDRA)

The CDRA is an umbrella group with members representing 160 different organisation in County Durham. The CDRA applied for and received £1,500 from Trafford Hall to run two day-long training sessions on welfare reform in their local area after attending the Wider World course.

Inputs	→	Outputs	→	Outcomes	→	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £1,500 to cover costs of the trainer 	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 representatives of local organisations trained over two day-long sessions 	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representatives return to their organisations and spread information they acquired in training - Based on success of two training sessions the CDRA is able to secure Big Lottery funding to support further sessions - With this money the CDRA organise a follow-on event, inviting local landlords, councillors and residents to come together over welfare reform - The CDRA secures a greater public profile and establishes itself as a useful local partner 	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100's of local people are directly and indirectly trained or informed about welfare reform - The residents association is strengthened through increased, legitimised profile and new funding sources - Information and knowledge about the welfare reforms spread widely across residents, community organisations, landlords and local government. - Follow on funding is secured enabling further future action.

Changes in Circumstance due to Tenant Future Training and Small Grant	Potential Savings
Individual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key CDRA contact had retired due to ill health and had never been active in the community. He claims that through the skills and confidence he acquired at Trafford Hall he became chair of his residents association, parish councillor and is now running for county councillor - Practice and confidence in submitting grant applications and managing money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Savings to public purse as an active retiree, for example in less need of health service support - Potential future funding due to experience applying for grant
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two training events on welfare reform - One community event bringing local stakeholders together on topic of welfare reform - Greater local understanding of welfare reforms, who they will affect and how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less strain on community budgets, for example replacement Social Fund schemes due to heightened understanding of welfare reforms - Less strain on support workers - Lower levels of household stress as a result of higher levels of information may lower ASB. - Efficiency savings due to diverse stakeholders working together on the issue.
Landlord	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed and motivated residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower levels of arrears and rate of eviction - Less money spent on tenant support - Self-sufficient tenants are less reliant on landlord services - Savings from having an effective intermediary contact between tenant and organisation

Case Study 2: Grant for Event – Bedford Road Neighbourhood Resource Centre

The Bedford Road Resource Centre is a community space that “helps the community help themselves” through youth clubs, computer training, benefit advice and other services. The centre is run on a voluntary basis. After attending the Tenant Futures *Reach Out* course, Bedford Road NRC decided to apply for a grant to hold an open day in their centre. Due to funding cuts the NRC had to reduce its opening hours, but volunteers want the community to know that the service is still around.

Inputs	→	Outputs	→	Outcomes	→	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £360 towards event advertising and refreshments 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 130 local residents & 12 community organisations attended an open day & held informal discussions on resident issues & how they could be resolved. This included 5 housing associations, local charities, the police, 2 councillors, local schools, and a day centre 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local fly tipping problem resolved. 2 housing associations provided skips & residents organised a clean-up day. - Mums and Tots group to support young mothers during the day set up at the NRC - job club launched at the NRC as a result of the open day - Regular information sessions planned on council cuts and welfare reform. - A new push to secure funding and start fundraising to further support the youth centre in the NRC. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brainstorming on what is needed locally and how to resolve it - Action planning - Local networking - Provision of needed services - Publicity for community resource centre - Fuller use of community space - Developing local support networks - Increased levels of employment

Changes in Circumstance due to Tenant Future Training	Potential Savings
Individual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual grievances heard - Issues addressed - Improved services and environment - Better parenting skills due to introduction of young parenting group - Increased possibility of employment due to weekly job clubs - Young people supported through youth club services - Practice and confidence in submitting grant applications and managing money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in individuals depending on services due to resilient community support network - Lower levels of worklessness leads to less dependency, higher levels of wellbeing, economic security etc. - Improved parenting leads to better outcomes for child later in life - Having a local centre providing services saves the community in travel cost to city centre - Successful grant applications may lead to future independent revenue streams
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximum use of community centre - Problems solved in partnership - Increased local networking - Increased and improved services and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in levels of ASB leads to savings to council - Lower costs of ground maintenance with reduced levels of vandalism
Landlord	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower ASB - Cleaner environment - Support for residents ex. job advice - Developing community partnerships - Developing relationship with resident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less money spent on mediation and community support - Less money spent on grounds maintenance - Savings accrued through community partners leading the way

Case Study 3: Grant for IT equipment and Visit – Washington Close Residents Association

Washington Close Residents Association applied and received two grants under the Tenant Futures programme. The first grant allowed for the purchase of IT equipment with which they created a website for their association.

Inputs	→	Outputs	→	Outcomes	→	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £550 for purchase of laptop, video camera and DVD player 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents Association Website - DVDs of local events for elderly housebound residents 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 75 residents and approximately 20 people in the community use website regularly to keep up to date on benefits, local services, events, volunteer opportunities, and local timetables. - Increased local profile - As a consequence received donations and local advertising on website - Increased credibility has increased funding/grants received - Housebound residents feel included and informed in local goings on 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed and connected residents - Landlord is involving Washington Close residents in building their new resident focused website - Lower levels of isolation - Strengthened RA through increased recognition and funding

Changes in Circumstance due to Tenant Future Training	Potential Savings
Individual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IT skills and computer literacy - Ability to develop platform for RA to share information more widely - Practice and confidence in submitting grant applications and managing money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer literacy simplifies and streamlines online payments and benefit receipt - Successful grant applications lead to future independent revenue streams
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community more informed about local services and events - Stronger network of local supporting partners - Lower levels of isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community pooling resources lessens financial needs of individual organisations - Lower levels of isolation through residents supporting residents - decreases pressures on public purse
Landlord	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using Washington Close residents to redesign housing association website to be more accessible to tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-supporting community decreases need for landlord support - New resident focused website will lead to efficiency savings due to improved and transparent communication

Case Study 4: Grant for Visit – Washington Close Residents Association

The second grant received by the Washington Close Residents Association was awarded after residents went on the *Mergers* course. The grant covered transportation to allow residents association members to meet equivalent residents of a housing association with which they were set to merge.

Inputs	→	Outputs	→	Outcomes	→	Impact
- £255 for a van rental to meet residents of merging organisation.	-	40 residents – 20 from each housing association – met to discuss the merger and their respective landlords.	-	Residents found that the merging organisations were held in high regard by their respective residents - Dispelled anxiety over pending merger - Residents documented the trip and shared the experience on the Washington Close website, consequently reassuring another 50 residents	-	Merger made more transparent to residents through information sharing and networking - Residents reassured and felt involved in the process - Merger made easier for the landlords - Smoother transition to new organisational structure

Changes in Circumstance due to Tenant Future Training	Potential Savings
Individual	
- Lowered anxiety and increased confidence in future of housing association - Practice and confidence in submitting grant applications and managing money	- Resident more settled knowing what future holds may lead to savings to support services - Successful grant applications lead to future independent revenue streams
Community	
- Networking and information sharing between communities	- The community avoids the mistakes the other group has learned from
Landlord	
- Easier more fluid transition to new organisational structure	- Landlord savings in time supporting and informing residents through transition

Case Study 5: Grant for Outreach – New Baguely TARA

Residents from the New Baguely TARA attended the Tenant Futures Wider World course to learn and report back to tenants on the welfare reforms. In order to spread the information they acquired during the training more widely across their community, the TARA applied for a grant to buy a fold-up gazebo, a banner and table and chairs to attend local events. They hoped that this would allow them to spread information on the reforms and develop greater awareness of their organisation.

Inputs	→	Outputs	→	Outcomes	→	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £500 for gazebo, banner, table and chairs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater local visibility at community events - A platform from which to spread knowledge on welfare reform 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More residents informed about changes to welfare - TARA's visibility led to higher attendance levels - from 25 to 40 residents at monthly meetings - Local stakeholders have started to attend meetings regularly including local police and county councillors - More local problem solving 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More informed public - Developed local partnerships - Higher levels of involvement - TARA acknowledged as legitimate forum for addressing tenants concerns and sharing information between residents

Changes in Circumstance due to Tenant Future Training	Potential Savings
Individual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In depth knowledge of welfare reforms - Practice and confidence in submitting grant applications and managing money - Increased role in residents association due to higher membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual avoids being caught off guard by reforms leads to savings by avoiding potential arrears and eviction - Successful grant applications lead to future independent revenue streams - Active citizen leads to savings to public purse in terms of support
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on welfare reform received in Tenant Futures training spread across the community - Resident association acknowledged as legitimate platform for raising issues and receiving information - Used by local representatives to speak to constituents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher levels of awareness regarding welfare reform may lead to local savings in terms of lower claims for discretionary housing payments and social fund claims - Local problems resolved quickly can lead to resource and efficiency savings - Lower levels of ASB
Landlord	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents informed themselves of benefit changes - Active and involved residents - Community concerns synthesised and fed back to landlord 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less money spent on frontline staff, benefit support, and income support team

Conclusion

It is clear that long lasting outcomes and impacts are achieved in all five case studies beyond the stated output of each grant. A strong case can also be made for the potential monetary savings to the public purse not just on an individual level, but also savings accruing at the community level or local authority and to the landlord. With additional funding for evaluation it would be possible to follow up on more grant case studies and extrapolate monetary outcomes for public savings initiated by the Tenant Futures programme.

Recommendation

- Secure additional funding to develop long-term monitoring of grant outcomes. The five case studies clearly make the case for the benefits to individual, community and landlord. The next step could be to monetise possibly savings.

VII. IN DEPTH INTERVIEW FEEDBACK

This section is based on 73 in-depth interviews conducted with Tenant Futures delegates, grant recipients and landlords in early 2013. The section is broken down by interviewee type.

I. Resident Feedback

50 Tenant Futures programme participants were interviewed for this evaluation. Interviews were semi-structured to allow tenants to freely express their opinion. Themes were developed based on the number of times a subject matter was mentioned and divided into sub-groups. Each theme listed below was mentioned by a minimum of ten participants.

Positive Feedback

All interviewed participants offered positive feedback on the Tenant Futures programme along the following five themes:

- **Praise for the Tenant Futures Programme and Trafford Hall**
All 50 participants interviewed praised their experience of the programme and Trafford Hall's facilities.
- **Praise for Trafford Hall facilities**
Echoing the positive feedback from the course evaluations, 42 participants praised the quality of Trafford Hall's facilities – especially the food and accommodation.
- **High quality training**
47 participants said that they felt the training they received through the Tenant Futures programme was of high quality.
- **Landlord support**
48 out of 50 participants said their landlords actively encouraged them to go to Trafford Hall. This support comes in the form of helping tenants identify suitable courses and covering transport costs to and from Chester.
- **Staying in touch**
25 of the interviewed participants said that they were impressed with how Trafford Hall and trainers kept in touch to share upcoming course material and tenant news.

Benefits of residential training

The benefit of residential training was the theme most mentioned by participants who praised the training model for three specific reasons:

- **Time away from home can be an empowering experience**
21 participants acknowledged that traveling away from home, or leaving an urban area for the countryside, was an experience that they cherished and felt improved their confidence.
- **Less distractions and more focus**
Participants feel that receiving residential training takes them away from the distractions of home and gives them more time to engage with the topic.
- **Networking with other tenants**
All 50 participant interviewed commented on the value of meeting tenants from around the country in terms of sharing good practice, generating ideas and learning about other contexts.

Training Outcomes

Participants frequently mentioned the following 15 specific training outcomes:

- Understanding new legislation
- Dealing with conflict and find resolutions
- Influencing and present information to landlords
- Evaluating their 'scrutiny and repairs' system
- Filling gap left by audit commission
- Playing an active role in mergers
- Addressing anti-social behaviour
- Committee skills
- Getting the most out of meetings
- Understanding how housing providers are structured
- Understanding of rules and regulation governing housing providers
- Chairing committees
- Improved complaints procedure
- Improved fundraising
- Ability to write action plans

Participants mentioned six general outcomes of the training:

- **Networks made at Trafford Hall are held and valued long after the course**
Many participants maintain the contacts they have made at Trafford Hall once they return to their community.
- **Training helps spread information locally**
38 participants specifically stated that they shared information they received at Trafford Hall with their community on their return home.
- **Enthusiasm and passion for the subject**
Participants said they returned to their community energised and motivated about their subject.
- **Learning from your peers**
Participants acknowledge that Trafford Hall and the Tenant Futures programme initiate tenant to tenant learning both during the course at Trafford Hall and upon their return home to their communities.
- **Developing new ideas**
Echoing course evaluation outcomes, many participants claimed that the training had given them new ideas on how to develop their tenant group, engage with their landlords or connect with the community.
- **Training engages and consequently retains volunteers**
11 participants made mention of training being an important instrument in making tenants feel they are developing and getting something in return for their work. This in turn helps retain tenant volunteers, and makes participation rewarding.

Importance of Tenant Futures training in the current climate

A final overarching theme in the participant interviews is that the need and demand for tenant training is felt to be much greater due to the current policy and economic context.

- **With cuts and changes in legislation tenant training is very important**
13 stated that tenant training is more valuable than ever in the light of cuts to institutions providing tenant support and changes in housing and benefit design. Participants felt that training broadened their knowledge and equipped them with skills to develop their own networks.
- **Receiving training from an independent institution**
Participants value Trafford Hall's independent status and tenant-centred approach. In a time when tenant involvement is in demand, participants felt that their landlord should not be their only source of information and appreciate that Trafford Hall leaves tenants with a broader, balanced understanding of housing topics.
- **Value for money in a time of resource constraint**
All 50 interviewees thought that going to Trafford Hall is time and money well spent. In making this assessment tenants weighed fees and travel costs, which averaged at approximately £75 per person, against the quality of the training they felt they had received.

Delegate Suggestions

- **Offer more courses**
12 participants said it was difficult to sign-up for courses due to high demand. Several suggested that Trafford Hall should offer more courses in response to this.
- **Tenants would like input on course topics**
Eight participants said they would like to be more involved in the conversation over types of courses offered at Trafford Hall. A course on managing community facilities was a popular suggestion.
- **Distance**
26 participants mentioned that extensive travel to Trafford Hall was both tiring and sometimes too expensive. Nine participants specifically mentioned the expensive taxi journey from Chester rail station to Trafford Hall and suggested that something be done about this.
- **Improve IT capabilities**
18 participants specifically mentioned poor broadband and computer facilities at Trafford Hall, suggesting that this should be improved especially for the web training courses. 3 participants felt that this had affected the quality of their training.
- **Course descriptions**
Four participants felt that the description of the course as advertised by Trafford Hall did not represent the actual course content accurately.
- **Funding cuts**
Three longer-term attendees of Trafford Hall training programmes claimed to notice the negative effects of funding cuts and staff shortage.

II. Grant Recipient Feedback

Ten grant recipients were interviewed following the receipt of their grant. The interviews were semi-structured with a focus on what outcomes the grants had affected in local communities. While grants were spent on projects with varying aims, the following eight themes emerged from the interviews.

- **Value of bringing training back to the community**
All ten grant recipients said that the grant enabled them to bring the Tenant Futures training back to their communities.
- **Grants help spread information across the community through training, events, website design or other promotion material**
All ten grant recipients made mention of how information they received during the training spread through their community as a consequence of the grant.
- **Grants give legitimacy to the organisation**
Four grant recipients claimed that their standing in the community had improved since their grant funded project and felt that it had strengthened their legitimacy as a valuable partner organisation.
- **Grants increase local profile and lead to greater tenant participation**
Seven grant recipients claimed they had seen an increase in their volunteers due to projects set up through seed funding and the advertising that promoted the project.
- **Activity enabled by grants allows tenants to be recognised as a legitimate partner and builds networks**
All ten recipients mentioned that the grant had initiated some kind of local partnership working. Below is a list of all the regional partners involved in the grant project and mentioned by the ten grant recipients:
 - County councils
 - Fire brigade
 - Age UK
 - MENCAP
 - Health Concern
 - Local library
 - Police
 - Youth clubs
 - Area housing associations
 - Local schools
 - Sea cadets
 - Scouts
 - Local businesses
 - TPAS
 - TAROE
- **Grants give tenants the opportunity to secure match funding and other sponsorship**
Four grant recipients said they'd gone on to secure further funding on the back of the Trafford Hall small seed grant.

- **Grants provide opportunities to generate new ideas, solutions and further outcomes and events beyond the mandate of the original bid**
Six grant recipients said that the grant had prompted successive event and training sessions. Four grant recipients claimed that the grant-funded project had given them new ideas and two claimed that the grant had enabled their community to find solutions to local problems.
- **“The project would not have been possible without the grant,”**
All ten grant recipients said the grant had enabled their project, and that the project would not have come to fruition without it.

III. Landlord Feedback

Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with social housing providers from around the country. The following eight themes emerged:

- **Landlords receive overwhelmingly positive feedback from tenants**
All landlords reported that tenants are happy with the Tenant Future’s training experience and have a positive opinion of Trafford Hall.
- **The quality of courses and facilities is high**
All landlords reported that tenants were satisfied with the quality of the courses and the facilities offered at Trafford Hall.
- **Low charge for courses**
All landlords interviewed stated that the Tenant Future’s training is good value for money, especially in the current climate of limited resources
- **The value of trained tenants to housing providers**
Landlords advocated for the value that trained tenants bring to their organisation. The rationale was supported as follows:
 - Resident engagement helps the housing provider customise services to meet their customers’ needs, avoiding long periods of trial and error.
 - Resident engagement saves money and improves the quality of the housing provider’s services, while avoiding spending on items residents do not find useful.
 - Resident engagement is more critical than ever since the abolition of the Tenant Services Authority. It is now up to residents to tell housing providers how they are performing and to hold them to account. Landlords argue that for tenants to replace regulators, training is essential.
 - Training helps residents’ access employment.
- **Enthusiasm, confidence and communication**
All housing providers state that training has built enthusiasm, confidence and better communication in their tenants. Five landlords mentioned the importance of developing “soft skills” in tenants including listening skills, ability to synthesise, report writing, and the ability to present information effectively. The same five landlords believed that the Tenant Futures programme had been successful in developing these skills in their tenants.
- **Seed grants manifest training locally**
Four out of eight landlords mentioned and praised the Tenant Futures small grant programme. Landlords believe that the programme allows tenants to bring their training back to their community. Outcomes of the small grants mentioned by landlords include:

- training a group of tenant inspectors
- delivering welfare training to tenants and staff
- setting up a resident website to share information across a rural area

Two out of the four landlords stated that the grant application process itself was seen as valuable to the tenant.

- **The benefits of residential training**

Seven out of eight housing providers acknowledged the benefits of residential training for their tenants. These benefits include

- a peaceful location away from daily distractions allowing residents to focus on the subject;
- additional time provided by an overnight stay which allows tenants to participate in a conversation and share their opinions;
- time for tenants from around the country to network and share best practice.

- **Landlord support tenants by covering travel expenses to Trafford Hall**

All landlords interviewed said they covered their tenants transport costs to and from Trafford Hall. The majority of tenants interviewed agreed with this, stating that their landlords supported them with travel and trainings costs.

Landlord suggestions

- Five out of eight landlords mentioned the physical **distance** from their organisation to Trafford Hall being a problem. Tenants from the South East and South West of England find it difficult to get to training at Trafford Hall due to transportation cost and travel time.
- **Landlords want their support for Trafford Hall** in terms of promoting courses to their residents to be **recognised**.
- Landlords want to be included in a conversation about programme aims and **course development**.
- Two landlords mentioned that the **IT facilities** at Trafford Hall could be improved.
- Six out of eight landlords mentioned that the Tenant Futures programme is **oversubscribed** and that it can be difficult to secure a spot for their tenants.

Landlord extrapolated outcomes

Money spent by landlords to cover the training fees and travel costs of their tenants averaged at £75 per tenants. According to Tenant Futures data, 7% of the 1241 tenants participating in the Tenant Futures programme by the end of March 2013 were funded by Trafford Hall. Consequently, by March 31st 2013, 1232 tenants going on Tenant Futures training courses were very possibly being supported by their landlord.

If we assume that 1232 tenants were supported by their landlord at an average of £75 to cover training and travel expenses, **participating landlords spent £92,400 in the 18 months since the inception of the Tenant Futures programme on sending their tenants to training**. That is the equivalent of 17% of the total funding provided by DCLG.

Recommendations

- Work more closely with housing providers on tenant training needs that would help them as social landlords.
- Develop a “Community Learning Forum” to tap tenants’ ideas.
- Develop new strategies for encouraging younger tenants to come to Trafford Hall.
- Take steps to improve IT facilities and internet connection.
- Offer more courses: to alleviate pressures and allow all interested tenants’ access.
- Consider options to alleviate transport costs for participants: from further afield and increase geographic reach.
- Increase funding for material costs such as photo copying.

VIII. ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Resources constraints

Returning delegates, staff and trainers all mentioned the increasing pressure felt by Trafford Hall as a result of resource constraints. Tenants who had visited Trafford Hall in the past, continued to praise the quality of the training, but believed that the atmosphere at Trafford Hall had been negatively influenced by funding problems and that the resources at their disposal had diminished. Trainers and staff reported that they had been stretched as far as they could go in providing high quality services at diminishing rates.

Tenants and trainers **feel that they are making do with limited resources**. Trainers especially said they were doing the best they could, but worried that with further reductions quality would suffer. They **think that the administrative staff at Trafford Hall are good, but feel they could use more support**. Trainers and some tenants felt that the staff at Trafford Hall are very helpful, but believe that they are under pressure due to funding cuts and staff shortages.

The development of this report also highlighted that monitoring and evaluation of the Tenant Futures programme becomes increasingly difficult if administrative staff are stretched and underfunded.

IX. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Tenant Futures programme is extremely valued by social housing tenants and their landlords. 1241 tenants report that the training is of high quality, and staff and trainers closely monitor evaluations to continuously check and improve the programme's quality. Residential training seems to galvanise a higher level of commitment and understanding of housing related subject matters, and there is a strong focus on follow-through action, and expanding training into the community.

Training gains are embodied in the Tenant Futures community grants programme. By June 2013, 67 seed grants had been distributed across the country to initiate local training, information events, IT access and online presence, outreach and best-practice visits. This evaluation extrapolates that approximately 6,462 tenants have directly or indirectly benefited from grants completed so far. The evaluation also shows that the grants have an impact far beyond their cost.

Finally, the evaluation shows that the venue, facilities, catering and residential time are much appreciated, offering an incentive to social housing tenants to participate fully and look forward to the training. While a little over half of the tenants on the Tenant Futures programme are repeat trainees at Trafford Hall, the constant recruitment of new participants is very encouraging and speaks to the success of Trafford Hall's marketing efforts. The big issue identified by tenant, staff and landlords alike is the constraints on resources and the difficulty retaining high quality standards under tightened budgets.

The following are the six core recommendations developed out of the evidence generated for this report.

Recommendations for the Tenant Futures programme:

- ❖ **Continue providing high quality training and accommodation**
The Tenant Futures programme was praised by tenants, landlords and community groups alike for being a high quality training experience. The results of this evaluation support this. It is therefore important that lower levels of available funding and resources over a sustained period of time do not erode these high standards.
- ❖ **Strive to meet benchmarks**
This includes making sure the tenant composition on the programme aligns with national equivalents as much as possible, as well as awarding the number of small grants outlined in the bid. The data collected for this evaluation makes the case for the high impact and potential savings as a result of the small grants. Holding to the grant benchmark of 132 and providing more administrative support to promote grant applications by October 2013 is highly recommended.
- ❖ **Increase administrative capacity** to support tenants in the grant application process
Trafford Hall staff say they have had less capacity than in previous funding periods to follow up with trained tenants and encourage them to apply for grants. Increasing administrative capacity would allow for staff to develop relationships with tenants on training courses and give them opportunities to actively encourage their application. Furthermore, staff could develop best practice examples of how grants have been used in communities and what outcomes they have initiated. This would give tenants in training a clear understanding of the overall potential of the grant programme.
- ❖ **Collect more consistent and robust data to aid programme evaluation**

The Tenant Futures programme would benefit from a clearer and more detailed system of data collection to monitor the benefits of training and the small grants programme. This means asking administrative staff to make this more of a priority, as well as re-working and standardising many of the tenant feedback systems to provide consistent outputs and qualitative as well as quantitative evidence. Clarity about what specific outcomes should be counted would benefit this exercise.

- ❖ Develop systems to include **landlord and tenant consultations** through the programme
Tenants and landlords were full of ideas about course development and what additional types of training would be useful in the community or for their organisation. Many expressed a desire for the Tenant Futures programme to set up a more formalised consultation scheme where ideas and suggestions for training development would be considered. This process has already been initiated by Trafford Hall, but requires higher levels of administrative support and consequently funding.
- ❖ Secure the appropriate amount of **funding** to sustain the high standard of training
The squeeze in funding and limits in resources available are clearly being felt by tenants, staff and trainers. Core costs such as covering administration functions to ensure that the Tenant Futures programme meets the five recommendations above – maintaining high quality, meeting benchmarks, increasing administrative capacity, improving data, and developing consultation systems - need to be acknowledged and supported financially. There needs to be a discussion of how to raise the level of funding.