Headlines from Tenant Think Tank: Changes and Challenges

Held at Trafford Hall, 20-21 April 2016

1. Tenants are very worried and threated by the Housing and Planning Bill. They see it as a direct attempt to abolish council housing and undermine social housing. They also worry about the heavy focus on owner-occupying.

2. Tenants had many experiences to recount of the damaging effect on people's lives of welfare reform and expressed the view that it often left the most vulnerable most exposed.

3. Many tenants had positive experiences of help they were receiving from their landlords. This applied to advice, sign-posting, community support, energy saving to save money etc. Community-based housing associations were more likely to be directly involved that bigger, more dispersed associations.

4. Tenants had many ideas of what landlords could do to help; and also what they could do themselves. Tenants spoke with pride _and_ modesty about their own work and they wanted landlords to help more with training volunteers.

5. There was a strong feeling that estates should _not_ be demolished and replaced with luxury homes, even when new social housing was included, mainly because it undermined community networks.

6. There was strong agreement that young people under-35 were very badly affected by all the cuts and we should do more to involve them.

7. Several tenants stressed how much it helped to get away to an environment like Trafford Hall. They like its simplicity and loved the chance of being away from pressures and able to think clearly. The gardens are inspiring.

8. Many find the current changes confusing and destabilising. They want to government to make clear what is really happening and what the plans really are.

9. Almost all tenants will have to report back to their landlords. We will feedback experiences, ideas, posters.

10. The Housing Plus Academy will work hard to reach more ethnic minorities, under-35s, working age tenants and Welsh tenants and landlords.