

Resident Involvement Statement and Impact assessment for the year 2009-2010

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Introduction

- 1.1 Each year Redland produces a statement saying how residents have been involved and what difference this has made
 - on a local community level,
 - in improving front-line services, and
 - in the strategic direction of the business.
- 1.2 Over the past year we have been focussing on making sure that resident involvement represents good value for money, so in this year's statement you will see more information about the costs and benefits of each resident involvement activity.

Highlights

- 2.2 On 1st April 2009, Redland heard that we had been accredited by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service for the quality of resident involvement in the organisation. Accreditation means that our resident engagement has been successfully tested against 29 main criteria looking at how well we know our residents and their aspirations.
- 2.3 The second phase of mystery shopping project, started in 2008, took place and the outcomes of the reality check published for residents in the newsletter, Redletter and on the website. The results of the mystery shopping helped to inform Redland of the customer's experience of services, and also equipped the focus group of residents with data to check Redland's performance in the area of customer service.

- 2.4 The Priority Estates Tool was put into practice at three estates. This tool identifies Redland developments where sustainability and quality of life is at risk and where priorities for estate meetings, community development and estate improvements should be focussed.
- 2.5 Our work with the Homeowners focus group has led to better transparency and understanding of value for money as the group reviewed the calculations for the management charge for freehold and leasehold owners. This work has been very detailed and the group's recommendations are due to be submitted to Redland's Board in May 2010.



Tenants, board members and staff receive the TPAS accreditation Kite mark at Tenants' Day 2009

Redland Residents' Committee (RRC)

- 3.1 The Redland Residents' Committee (RRC) is the strategic vehicle for delivering Redland's resident involvement strategy. The committee has a formal constitution and committee members are elected by all Redland's residents.
- 3.2 The committee receives reports from, and makes recommendations and observations to the Board and is mainly concerned with influencing how and when Redland involves residents. The committee directs the work of other groups, by appointing members as appropriate, approving constitutions and terms of reference and by receiving regular reports from those groups.
- 3.3 The RRC sets objectives for resident involvement each year, and reviews achievements against targets for the previous year. See annex A for the 2009/10 action plan, which also indicates which actions have been completed and which are outstanding.

What did it cost?

3.4 The Redland Residents' Committee has a budget of £15,000 to spend on its activities. This includes costs of all RRC, Neighbourhood Voice and focus group meetings, and in particular the travelling costs of residents to attend these and training sessions, as well as the TPAS conference, and costs associated with being members of the Somerset County Tenants Forum. The balance at the end of the year was £883.35. The RRC receives a report on expenditure every quarter and a summary of expenditure at the end of the financial year to help them make decisions about how to spend the money in the coming year.

What difference did it make?

3.5 In the past year the RRC has made sure residents interests were represented in the following things:

- Business plan for 2010/11
- Value for Money strategy formation
- Refreshing the Somer Housing Group vision
- Participation in the Tenant Services Authority National Conversation about the creation of new standards for social landlords (March –July 2009).
- Pursuing involvement of residents in the design and development of new homes (November 2009)
- Quizzing the contractor installing heating upgrades for Redland on the process and delivery of the contract. (September 2009)
- Approving community action grants to the value of £1043.84
- Playing an active part in the Somerset County Tenants Forum; a regional group of social housing tenants in Somerset to which the RRC subscribes. Redland hosted the SCTF in March 2010 and Somer Housing Group's Service Improvement Manager, Rebecca Caprara gave a presentation on the Systems Thinking Intervention on Redland's responsive repairs service.
- Overseeing the work of a range of different focus groups

Resident Board members

4.1 Board membership enables residents to be involved at the most strategic level. Resident Board members influence business planning, policy and strategic direction. Redland's Board reserves three places for resident Board members. Homeowners to whom Redland provides a management service are eligible but will fill no more than one place.

4.2 Prospective resident Board members are nominated by the Redland Residents' Committee: the committee establishes an interview panel which shortlists and interviews applicants and makes a recommendation to the Board.

4.3 Though external training for people interested in becoming a board member was advertised in Redletter, there was no take up for this course. Next year we plan to hold an event specifically for Redland residents to

find out more about the governance of the organisation. This will be advertised through Redletter again, the website, via word of mouth through the Housing Officers, and a poster campaign on estate notice boards.

4.4 RRC members are welcome to observe board meetings. This arrangement not only benefits these individuals with a better understanding of how decisions are made about the business and how feedback and involvement of residents contribute to decision making, but also strengthens the link between the RRC and the board.

Focus groups

5.1 Focus groups are small groups which consider a specific issue or subject. Their purpose is to

- take ownership of policy and procedure documents in their area
- set, review and monitor service standards and advise on how these should be publicised
- ensure Redland collects appropriate feedback on services and uses it to improve services
- assist Redland in periodic reviews of services, such as Best Value Reviews and Systems Thinking Interventions.

5.2 Focus groups enable involvement in specific issues and, along with relevant training, enable residents to gain knowledge and experience of a particular issue. Each group provides a report to the RRC once a year saying what their group has achieved in the year and how residents have been involved in shaping their service area.

5.3 Focus groups create, review and develop service standards which are published on Redland's website and in a series of articles in Redletter.

What did it cost?

5.4 The focus group costs include venue hire and catering and residents travel expenses for attending, and came to £1141.91 this year.

What difference did it make?

5.5 Highlights for the groups achievements in improving services:

5.6 **Estate management** - In response to the housing management review survey which told us that Redland did not score highly on 'knowing what's needed on my estate', the estate management focus group decided to instigate a gardening and cleaning satisfaction survey to invite more feedback from residents about what's working well, and not so well with these services. The questionnaire has been printed and the first batch sent out in January 2010. The second batch will be sent out in June 2010. The results of the survey will be shared with the focus group so that they will influence the outcome of gathering this data for these services to be improved. This group has been involved in developing a new estate inspection procedure which will give greater confidence to residents that Redland knows what's happening on their estate and what Redland is doing to address residents' concerns.

- 5.7 **Nuisance and ASB** - This group has met twice over the past year. They reviewed their service standards and changed one from 'publicise successful outcomes of at least 2 cases each year to 'publicise the outcomes of at least 2 cases each year'. They also advised that Redland should publish the area that the ASB happened, but should not publicise names or addresses. The group reviewed the ASB leaflet in the residents' leaflet series and made changes to the list of behaviours classed as ASB. The group also carried out a telephone survey in to monitor resident satisfaction with reporting cases of ASB, and the results helped to inform the decision to review this service in 2010.
- 5.8 **Communications** - The group completed the review of the Tenants Handbook and leaflet series. Rather than reviewing each leaflet on a rolling basis every three years, the group decided to review all of these documents at once so that all the information matches up, and in order to make a saving on Plain English Campaign editing and crystal mark costs.
- 5.9 **Equality and Diversity Action Group** - The group have been taking an overview of what Redland is doing as an organisation to ensure that all decisions are made with awareness of the impact they will have on equality of access to services and recognising the diversity of Redland's customers, employees and partners.
- 5.10 **Customer Care** - The group played a key role in reviewing the customer care policy, and in putting together Redland's new customer care charter in 2008 and in 2009 this was tested in the mystery shopping project. The some of the service standards devised by the group were also tested using the mystery shopping method. Following their involvement in the getting to know you project, helping Redland to get better acquainted with the needs of our tenants, the group recommended that we publish a leaflet introducing all the front line staff. This was published and sent to all residents with the keeping in touch questionnaire to keep all the contact and preference information up to date.
- 5.11 **Maintaining Homes** - The group has influenced the aims and objectives of the Systems Thinking Intervention that has recently taken place which involved agreeing the priorities of the service. This led to a new customer feedback form which the group has helped to design, and a new set of service standards. A representative of the group also joined the project team responsible for procuring a new heating contract.
- 5.12 **Homeowners** - This year the group formed a sub-group to review the way that the management charge is calculated for owners. This work is coming to an end and the group is making recommendations to the Homeowners Group and Redland's Board in May.
- 5.13 **Rents** - The group supported the appointment of a Money Management Officer during the year replacing the rent officer post. The role aims to

be more proactive in offering support to people struggling to pay their rent. The group looked at the priorities for residents that emerged in the housing management service review for debt advice and supported the approach to the Citizens Advice Bureau to set up a service level agreement whereby Redland tenants can access a 'fasttrack' debt advice service. The group has been meeting for just over a year and have now set service standards for the rent collecting service.

5.14 Lettings - Last year the group reviewed the documents provided to tenants when they sign their tenancy agreement and move in. The pack was streamlined and the repairs handbook added and the group were satisfied that the sign up pack provides all the relevant information needed by the tenant at that point. The group decided to keep their service standards and monitored them during the year. One of the standards regarding satisfaction with cleanliness and tidiness of the property was not met and the group will keep an eye on this.

5.15 Housing with support - The group have advised and helped Redland manage smoothly the upgrade of alarm systems in sheltered housing schemes. Recommendations and ideas generated by the group have all been put into practice:

- Invitation to community police support officers to sheltered schemes to talk to residents at their coffee mornings about security
- an article in Redletter reminding tenants to ask Redland if they do not know where their water stop cock is
- request to have a communal wheelchair situated at each sheltered site.
- promote the installation of water meters for tenants who would save money using this facility.

The group also

- reviewed and kept their standards which were all met this year
- carried out a satisfaction survey on aids and adaptations, and
- contributed to the Tenant Services Authority sponsored pilot project to set up a Bristol-wide local standard on aids and adaptations.

*There are nine focus groups that set service standards, and two others, namely, editorial group and social committee, that do not set standards.

Residents' Panel

6.1 The Residents' Panel is a "reading panel": its role is to provide residents with the opportunity to be involved through postal/telephone surveys, questionnaires and similar. Residents have told us that, overwhelmingly, they favour these methods of consultation and involvement. Membership of the Residents' Panel is positively encouraged amongst all residents, and all new residents are invited to join and to tell us their particular interests.

- 6.2 The Residents' Panel also records the particular interests of its members so that we can target surveys and policy review consultations at those most likely to respond. Surveys and questionnaires may be on any of a whole range of matters but will include
- feedback on service provision
 - comment on policies
 - surveys associated with best value and other reviews carried out by departments, individuals or focus groups
- 6.3 The focus for the Residents' Panel will be on strategic, policy or procedural matters, rather than on local issues (where consultation with residents' associations etc will be more appropriate).
- 6.4 This year we consulted the people who said they were interested in how Redland deals with anti-social behaviour and nuisance on the following policies related to tenancy matters
- Pets
 - Drugs
 - Domestic Violence
 - Racist incidents and hate crime

What did it cost?

- 6.5 These consultations were carried out through two mailings costing £67.50.

What difference did it make?

- 6.5 Keeping pets – We received about 12 responses in support of the policy principle allowing pets wherever possible. No significant changes were made to the policy.
- 6.6 Dealing with drugs – Feedback on this policy highlighted the need to emphasize that the policy covers family members and visitors to Redland properties and the impact this has on the tenant. The policy was amended to show this.
- 6.7 Dealing with domestic violence – A couple of the responses on domestic violence policy pointed out that domestic violence affects men as well as women and so we changed the reflected this in the language of the policy and included a phone number for male victims in the residents leaflet.
- 6.8 Dealing with hate crime – We received about five responses which all supported the principles of the policy. One response referred to the need to support people wrongly accused, which we noted and kept the principle to investigate reports of hate crime thoroughly

Redletter and publications

- 7.1 Following the survey of all tenants on Redletter the editorial group decided to continue producing two issues per year, and renewed their determination to find articles and stories containing useful and relevant

information, or points of personal interest. Three of the group's five members resigned due to ill health, and we are looking for volunteers to join the group or contribute articles.

7.2 Performance information to enable tenants to hold Redland to account is published in the following ways:

- Redletter twice a year
- Redland's performance once a year
- Website (which includes a link to the Tenant Service Authority portal comparing performance information of housing associations), updating every three months.

What did it cost?

7.3 It cost Redland just under £2,700 to produce two Redletter magazines including the cost of facilitating the editorial group. The Performance report cost the organisation £422.83 (printing costs only, designed in house).

What difference did it make?

7.3 In 2008 we carried out a survey to find out what the readers think about the magazine which 68 people answered (5% response rate).

Please rate the following aspects of Redletter:	Didn't answer	Poor or very poor	Good or very good
Contains items of interest to you	6%	5%	88%
Gives information about Redland	6%	3%	91%
Gives information about residents' activities and your community	6%	13%	81%
Is representative of your area*	12%	34%	54%
Looks attractive	6%	3%	91%
Is about the right length	7%	3%	89%
Is value for money (£1.77 to design and print)	6%	10%	84%

7.4 One resident got in touch with us having used one of the services advertised in Redletter for One Space parenting website for single parents. She had used the networking site to get advice when she was struggling in her relationship with her daughter and found the advice to be really good and that it helped to know that other single parents had faced the same issues.

Tenants' day

8.1 This is an annual event that all tenants where all our tenants are invited. The day is planned by a social committee of tenants, who decide the

theme, the content, the venue, the contributors and generally what happens on the day.

- 8.2 The theme this year was Celebrating Communities and aimed to cover a range of aspects of communities, from the light hearted, fun aspect to the quite serious. We had 53 residents attend tenants' day out of 63 that booked tickets.

What did it cost?

- 8.3 The whole event, including the travel costs associated with getting people there, cost £4238.57 or £55.77 per head.

What difference did it make?

- 8.3 Of those that filled in a feedback form, all gave positive feedback about the day and all said they would come again. The workshops provided were most frequently cited as the most successful part of the day, particularly the workshop provided by Mediation Somerset on mediation skills for life, and that provided by Upper Horfield Community Association, called 'making things happen'.
- 8.4 The social committee that organised Tenants' Day met in November 09 to discuss whether the day delivered good value for money. The group had mixed feelings about the day despite the positive feedback from people that attended. Decisions the group made were to
- choose a different venue next year
 - social committee to meet workshop leaders before the event to clarify requirements and expectations
 - consider opening up the event to owners as well as tenants
 - move the event back to September
 - clarify roles and tasks by way of a team briefing in the morning before the event begins.



Tenants enjoying the laughter clinic and warm up quiz at Tenants' day

Mystery shopping and Resident Inspectors

- 9.1 As part of Redland's commitment to empower residents to scrutinise services we have continued the mystery shopping project. Mystery shopping is a form of market research which a team of Redland and

Somer Community Housing Trust tenants have been trained to use to test front-line customer services.

9.2 The second phase of mystery shopping took place in April 2009 and the results presented to staff and residents in July 2009. The full report including the action plan is available on request from Redland's office and can be found on the website at http://www.somerhousinggroup.co.uk/redland_housing_association/residents/working_with_you/mystery_shopping.aspx

9.3 The project provided a reality check on what it is like for customers using Redland's services and the data has been used by the customer care focus groups to monitor the service standards. The next step is to develop the team's skills into other types of inspection so that they can provide intelligence to enable residents to scrutinise Redland's services more comprehensively.

What did it cost?

9.4 The project cost £1335.92

What difference did it make?

9.4 The mystery shopping project brought the following benefits:

- training 17 residents in new transferable skills
- objective intelligence on customer's experience of Redland's customer service
- awareness of need to better equip front-line staff with information about policies and services throughout organisation, which has been addressed.
- Production of data to help customer care focus group monitor standards.
- Ability for Redland to publish performance data in this area for all residents to see.

Training

10.1 Although the RRC action plan shows that we have not delivered all of the training requested by residents this year the training we have delivered is shown below.

Subject	Speaker/ Provider	Venue	Take up	Cost	Cost per head
Secretary skills	InSTEP	London	1	£ 81.85	£ 81.85
Mystery shopping training and refresher	TPAS	Bath	17	£ 1,236.02	£ 72.71

Healthy People and Homes	Bristol Partnership for Tenants: cooking demo, DIY workshop, Silai for skills, Tai Chi and massage	Rosegreen Centre	18	£ 650.61	£ 36.15
Tenant Inspector Training	InSTEP	Exeter	1	£ 113.85	£ 113.85
Involving Tenants in repairs service	InSTEP	Exeter	1	£ 113.85	£ 113.85
TPAS Conference	TPAS	Birmingham	3	£ 1,721.55	£ 573.85
Mediation	Mediation Somerset	Winter Gardens	14	£ 200.00	£ 13.00
Green Living	Bristol Partnership for Tenants: Hanham Hall debate, Energy Trust, and Britain in Bloom	Rosegreen Centre	9	£ 337.51	£ 37.50
Neighbourhood Voice training (2 days)	Red Kite	Redland	8	£ 1,350.00	£ 168.75
Tenant Scrutiny, joint session organised by SCHAT (16 residents in total)	TPAS	Maltings, Bath	6	£ 175.00	£ 29.17

10.2 Less formal training also takes place within focus groups led by focus group leaders in order to make sure that involved residents have all the information and background they need to make informed decisions.

10.3 We have monitored who is accessing the training offered and this information is shown in the table in the section about involving underrepresented groups.

10.4 The whole staff team attended a refresher guide session on the ways that residents can be involved at Redland in March 2009. This is something we will continue to do as this helps to foster an ethos of involving residents in services, as does having each officer and manager in the organisation responsible for working with a focus group.

What did it cost?

10.5 The average cost per head for training was £124.07; however this average comes down to £74.09 if we exclude the TPAS conference.

10.6 We have achieved better value for money by joining together with other housing associations to provide training, for example, the Tenant Scrutiny training provided by TPAS, but which Redland shared with Somer Community Housing Trust. The Bristol Partnership for Tenants is a group of housing associations together now with the council, who pool resources to provide information and training events for tenants across the city. It is beneficial to work together because we share the costs, share the contacts and ideas, and are able to choose topics that residents have asked for.

What difference did it make?

10.7 All the training in the table above had different purposes, some of which are covered in other parts of this statement. Here are some of the comments made by residents who attended the training events organised by the Bristol Partnership for Tenants about the difference it made to them:

"The information can also be shared with family and friends and in the workplace."

"Good advice. Has given me information I can use on a day to day basis."

"Found the sessions beneficial and could boost my confidence to try some of the suggestions made."



A Redland tenant getting stuck in at the Healthy People and Homes Day, and Britain in Bloom judge, John Wheatley gives a workshop at the Green Living event

Neighbourhood Voices (NVs)

11.1 Redland encourages NVs (resident representatives) on estates where there is insufficient interest to form a residents' association. Democratically elected on a two yearly cycle, NVs are local points of contact for Redland operational staff, including carrying out estate inspections with housing officers, gathering feedback on estate and neighbourhood issues. They represent their neighbours at the Neighbourhood Voice Panel which aims to help communication between Redland residents and staff.

11.2 The NVs agreed in 2009 to initiate estate tours of each other's areas so as to understand better the range of sites that Redland manages and to understand how the NV role can vary from place to place. The first site visit was to Stowey Road in Yatton and was agreed by the NVs to be a useful activity and so Clockhouse Mews and Orchard Close in Portishead were chosen for the next estate tour.



Neighbourhood Voices on tour at Stowey Road in September 09

What did it cost?

11.3 The Neighbourhood Voices cost £736.37. This was spent on venues and travel costs to their meetings and the estate tour in September, and the cost of the administration carried out by NVs. The costs of the two day training in November was £1,350, as eight of the 16 NVs attended, this worked out as £84.36 per person per day.

What difference did it make?

11.3 The group were offered training in November 2009, which seven out of 16 NVs and one Residents' Association spokesperson were able to attend. The training aimed to strengthen the group's confidence and ability to represent people fairly, how to build consensus, handle conflict, manage people's expectations and also to help the group identify what works well with the Neighbourhood Voice Panel and how to improve the things that do not work as well.

11.4 The NVs that attended assembled a set of proposals to put to the other NVs, which has resulted in changes to the way the NV panel operates, leading to better support for NVs, and better communication on estate maintenance.

11.5 On the 31st March 2010 we have 16 Neighbourhood Voices, four of whom were newly elected in the last year.

11.6 Here are some of the things that individual NVs have achieved throughout the year.

Supported an elderly neighbour getting a gate put on side access to prevent litter blowing in - <i>Jena Court, Salford</i>
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Facilitated consultation with residents on site to renovate a flowerbed - <i>Meg Thatchers Green, St George</i>

Facilitated residents contribution to the TSA's National Conversation - <i>Meg Thatchers Green, St George</i>

Facilitated consultation with residents on site to decide on improvements to
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communal garden - <i>Prospect House, Worle</i>
Instigated residents' meetings to build support for a residents' association - <i>Meg Thatchers Green, St George</i>
Became a Community Crime Fighter and joined the anti-social behaviour and nuisance focus group - <i>Ridgeway Court, Whitchurch</i>
Provided liaison during aerial upgrade works in preparation for the digital switchover - <i>Clockhouse Mews and Orchard Close, Portishead (also Keynsham Residents Group)</i>
Helped inform neighbours of resident involvement by posting RRC minutes on notice boards where available - <i>Various</i>

Priority Estates Tool

12.1 The Priority Estates Tool identifies Redland estates where sustainability and quality of life is at risk, and where priorities for estate meetings, community development and estate improvements should be focussed.

12.2 The tool combines a number of different indicators, using a "traffic light" system to identify concerns, into an overall rating. The indicators take account of

- Condition of communal areas recorded in estate inspections
- How often people are moving in and out
- Number of repairs ordered
- Number of cases of anti social behaviour reported
- Number of orders for removal of graffiti and fly tipping
- A snap shot of the collective rate of rent arrears
- Whether any of the residents are involved in the formal structure
- Whether there are any residents in the estate who said they were dissatisfied with their neighbourhood in the STATUS survey.

12.3 The indicators are assessed and turned into a table at the end of each *calendar* year which enables us to identify priority estates before the start of a financial year to aid in budgeting and business planning processes.

12.4 This year the three 'estates' identified were

- Hicks Court in St George, where a community cohesion project is underway which includes significant estate improvements including a play area for children and overhaul of the entry system into the building;
- Old Dairy Court and 33 Old Street, Clevedon, where minor estate improvements have been negotiated by residents, including more lighting in communal areas, better safety fence around a stream, and removing an unwanted flowerbed; and
- Maytrees in Eastville, where the Housing Officer is negotiating with the management company to provide more convenient access to the block through an intercom system.

12.5 The PET scheme opens up the opportunity for residents to say what they like about where they live, and what could improve their quality of life. A paper and telephone survey opens up the dialogue with residents on

these issues, and a residents' meeting is offered to discuss solutions to the issues raised.

What did it cost?

12.6 The cost of the PET depends on how much and what the residents want to change about where they live. At Old Dairy Court and 33 Old Street, Clevedon, the consultation with residents and the following actions including estate improvements cost £2,530.

What difference did it make?

21.7 All that we spend on this process is negotiated with the residents. As this a new process, the estate improvements have not been completed yet we cannot accurately describe the difference they have made. Impact assessments will be completed for each project.

Community Action Grant

13.1 The Community Action Grant was set up in 2008 and aims to support projects that involve everyone in the local community, develop skills and confidence, promote good relationships between neighbours, promote community safety, improve quality of life, and improve health and well-being.

13.2 Grants were awarded by the approval panel consisting of two RRC members and two staff members to six projects

13.3 The grant is advertised in Redletter and on Redland's website, and the number of bids doubled this year. When we asked tenants at Tenants' Day 2009 how we could raise awareness about the Community Action Grant they said we could put posters up on communal notice boards and use housing and support officers to promote along side estate inspections, so that's what we will do in 2010.

What did it cost?

13.4 Grants totalled £1043.84. Meeting costs of the approval panel were minimal as meetings were held on days when these tenants were already coming to a meeting at Redland.

What difference did it make?

13.5 Here's how the grant money was used:

- Enhanced communal garden for Augustus House residents in Hanham;
- Sponsorship of the Camerton Village Day which brings the community together see website for Camerton Residents' Association photos http://www.cra.btik.com/p_Gallery.ikml
- Enhanced communal garden for residents at 174 High Street, Hanham;
- Communal garden shed for residents at Summerhill House in Totterdown;
- Flip chart easel and printer cartridges to help Keynsham Residents' Group keep residents informed; and

- Materials for Baynham Court (Hanham) residents to build a patio and seating area.



Residents at Summerhill House, Totterdown used the Community Action Grant to buy a garden shed

How does Redland compare with other landlords?

14.1 We are improving the way we compare Redland's performance data with that of other similar organisations. The data in the table below compares Redland's performance in the resident involvement service for the year 2008 and 2009 with other organisations and sector averages.

	Redland	National average for organisations with less than 5,000 properties unless otherwise stated
Spend per tenant on Resident Involvement	£42.35	£32.45
Satisfaction with opportunities for involvement*	78%	62.6% (local average)
Satisfaction with how RHA takes account of your views*	92%	64% (national average for all housing organisations)
Satisfaction with keeping residents informed*	89%	83.4%
Residents who have received training as a percentage of properties managed	6%	0.7% (national average for all housing organisations)
Overall tenant satisfaction	84%	83.6% (local average)

*Redland figures from STATUS survey in 2007, other figures from housing corporation housing performance indicators and from Housemark.

14.2 Housemark provides a website based tool for comparing landlords in terms of costs, resources, and performance. The Housing Management review group recommended last year that Redland does not join Housemark, owing to the lack of comparable housing management data at the time from organisations of a similar size to Redland in the South West. This decision is under review again, as benchmarking is one of the key ways that we use to assess how we are performing as a landlord.

Involving underrepresented groups

15.1 The Equality and Diversity Action group this year asked the resident involvement team to find out what impact the residents' panel has in terms of gathering views from underrepresented groups.

15.2 Taking a snap shot at the end of January 2010, there were 50 Redland residents involved in the formal structure of involvement (including RRC, NVs, Board members, and focus group members). This represents 4% of all social rented households. At the same point in time there were 273 members of the residents' panel (residents registered to respond to surveys and questionnaires). This represents 22% of all social rented households.

Redland HA: Resident Profile data – snapshot as at Jan 2010

Age	Of tenants	By household	Formal structure	Residents' panel*	Training up-take*
0-20	2%		0.0%	0.3%	People of all ages between 10 and 78 attended this year
21-40	31%		7.8%	17.6%	
41-60	35%		37.3%	33.8%	
61-80	25%		45.1%	30.7%	
81+	7%		2.0%	6.9%	
not known			7.8%	10.7%	
Ethnic Origin					
White British	81%	78%	88.0%	71.4%	79.2%
Other	11%	11%	12.0%	12.1%	20.8%
Not known/refused	8%	11%		16.5%	0.0%
Disability					
Residents with a disability (as % of known data)	20%		31.0%	26.7%	24.0%
Not known	30%		15.6%	29.3%	0.0%
Gender					
Male	36%		46.0%	36.8%	49.0%
Female	64%		54.0%	63.2%	51.0%

- 15.3 Residents between the ages of 21 and 40 are significantly underrepresented in the formal involvement structure. They participate more in the residents' panel, but are still underrepresented here.
- 15.4 People between the ages of 61 and 80 are most likely to participate in the formal structures of involvement and the residents' panel.
- 15.5 Interestingly, people with disabilities are more likely to participate in formal structures of involvement, the residents' panel and training, but we should beware that there are 30% of residents for whom we do not hold this information.
- 15.6 In the mystery shopping project this year we targeted new tenants and invited all tenants who have been with Redland for less than a year to join the project. Interestingly, although we did not specifically target young people with our marketing, the demographic spread of the 17 Redland and Somer Community Housing Trust tenants that took part was such that 29% were under the age of 25 and 59% were under the age of 45. As this project develops we hope that this less traditional method of involvement continues to attract the younger tenant to address the age imbalance.
- 15.7 We also want to develop other innovative ways of capturing the views and input of younger people.
- 15.8 As we develop this monitoring data we want to gather more intelligence, such as where people who are involved tend to live, how long they have been a tenant of Redland, and what proportions of non-English speakers participate.

Plans for next year

Item	Who's working on it?
Empowering residents to scrutinise services: Group-wide project, including a review of resident involvement structures	Resident Involvement Manager reporting to RRC on progress and facilitating RRC input into discussion.
Review Partnership Agreement and Resident Involvement Policy	Resident Involvement team with a working group of residents
Build strength of focus groups, including training and capacity for scrutiny and ownership of feedback from wider resident body	Resident involvement team, focus group leaders and members
Focus groups to oversee the way we collect feedback and satisfaction data from residents	Focus will decide on how this information should be sought and collected and work with Redland to interpret data and decide how this should impact on services.
Oversee the way that feedback from residents is used as a learning tool, and applied to improve	Feedback back on each service led by focus groups. STATUS led by RRC

services, and reported to residents, including STATUS.	
Training programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - context of social housing - skills for involvement 	Resident involvement team to investigate most cost effective ways of delivering this training and advertise to residents
Promoting financial inclusion and affordability	Head of Customer Services with input from RRC, rents focus group, residents panel, and attendees at Tenants day '08 and '09
Oversee resident involvement in development of new homes	Somer Housing Group Development Team resident involvement team and RRC
Assess impact of 'Better Neighbourhoods' project on resident involvement and empowerment at a local level	Particularly Neighbourhood Voice panel, estate management focus group and Housing team
Participate in developing a Somer Standard for Redland's homes as part of a Somer Housing Group standard	Maintaining Homes focus group
Provide accessible and useful information for residents on what they can expect from gardening contractors.	Estate management focus group with housing team
Increase the diversity of residents involved in influencing services	Targeted recruitment by involvement team and by increased local involvement generally
Produce the annual involvement statement and impact assessment for the year 2010/2011	Resident Involvement Manager and RRC

Conclusion

This report shows that Redland has an effective structure for the involvement of residents that offers many different ways to residents to get involved in decision making from the most strategic level of business planning, to local decisions about what their neighbourhood looks like through the Community Action grant and the role of Neighbourhood Voice.

The strategy is resourced appropriately, and decisions about the best way to offer involvement opportunities take account of what is good value for money.

As you can see from the action plan, it does not stop there! There are plans afoot to better empower all residents to influence their local neighbourhood, without having to become an elected representative, through the Better Neighbourhoods project, and also to review the structure enabling residents to challenge the decisions made throughout the organisation as we talk more about scrutiny.

Next year's involvement statement and impact assessment will assess our progress in all of these areas.