



**Involving People**  
**A Strategy for Client Involvement**

**July 2009**

## Contents

1	<b>Introduction</b>	3
2	<b>Background and Context</b>	4
3	<b>The Research</b>	4
4	<b>Findings from the Research</b>	5
5	<b>Principles</b>	5
6	<b>Motivating - Engaging – Involving</b>	6
7	<b>Information and Feedback</b>	7
8	<b>Formal Opportunities for Involving People in Decision and Policy Making</b>	7
9	<b>Reviewing Involvement</b>	8
10	<b>Recommendations and Actions</b>	8
11	<b>Milestones</b>	10
	<b>Appendix 1 Current opportunities for involvement in Shape</b>	11
	<b>Appendix 2 Research and Findings</b>	12
	<b>Appendix 3 Ways We Share Information with Clients</b>	30
	<b>Appendix 4 – ShapeBook Involving People Toolkit – <i>to be developed</i></b>	

## Involving People Shape's Strategy for Client Involvement

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Shape's mission is to reduce homelessness and help people unlock their potential by offering excellent training, support and accommodation services.
- 1.2. Involving the people who receive our services is central to providing a housing and support service that can continuously improve. Only through listening to our clients and giving them a voice can we be certain that our services are effectively addressing their needs and helping them to achieve their potential for independence.
- 1.3. This document aims to develop an involvement strategy which will put the individual at the centre of the process and be both an accessible and meaningful document.
- 1.4. As a registered social landlord (RSL), Shape is required both through statute and regulation to encourage and enable residents and other stakeholders to become effectively engaged and involved, and have a demonstrable influence in all areas of housing and community interest.
- 1.5. Through legislation tenants have a right to information and consultation and RSL's are required to involve residents in all areas of activity, ranging from service delivery to the highest strategic level.
- 1.6. Likewise our funders and regulators, Supporting People, ask that we have a high level of involvement in all aspects of the business.
- 1.7. The **overall goal** of this strategy is to provide real opportunities at every level of the organisation for the people who receive our services to influence and be involved in the management, planning, development and governance of their support and housing services.

In turn this promotes:

- Choice and control
  - Empowerment
  - Inclusion
  - Needs led Services
  - Increased independence
  - Building life skills, communication skills, confidence and self esteem
  - Quality service provision and quality of life
  - Added value to our organisation and services
- 1.8. This strategy aims to build on existing involvement mechanisms and explore both recognised and innovative ways to provide a range of choices for people who use our services to be involved.

## 2. Background and Context

- 2.1 At any one time Shape currently provides supported short term accommodation to 151 residents across Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and Wiltshire. It has 25 general needs long term tenancies. It also provides floating support and outreach services to approximately 70 non residents per year.
- 2.2 Shape's main client groups are young people aged 16 – 25 who may be care leavers or vulnerable young people with unstable backgrounds and chaotic lifestyles, and homeless families and individuals including those with more complex needs who are offered temporary accommodation either in a hostel or traditional housing. The temporary nature of the occupation and the younger age of most residents make it more difficult to successfully engage residents with traditional and more formal methods of involvement.
- 2.3 At present there are a number of involvement mechanisms taking place within the different schemes but these vary in application and effectiveness. These are detailed at **appendix 1**.
- 2.4 Shape has procedures in place for consulting and involving people but it was felt important to determine what engagement was actually taking place and the quality of that engagement. To this end Shape commissioned the services of the Trust's Community Initiatives Officer to research current practice and seek the views of residents on how to improve the mechanisms for consultation and involvement.

## 3. The Research

- 3.1 The findings of the research are attached as **appendix 2** (abridged). The researcher made contact with all members of Shape's operational staff by way of a 'Learn over Lunch' session on resident involvement and individually meeting at the schemes.
- 3.2 The researcher sent a questionnaire to all Shape clients together with a FREEPOST envelope and the chance to win a £25.00 voucher. Support was offered if needed to complete the Questionnaire either from the clients, Support Worker or by the researcher.
- 3.3 Of the 152 questionnaires that were sent out to residents, 17 were completed (11%). This is representative of the average response (10%) for consultation of this nature.
- 3.4 Those people who indicated their willingness to be further consulted were invited to take part in a Focus Group to look at Service User involvement in more depth. Unfortunately attendance at the Focus Group was poor with only one resident attending. However a further 6 were successfully contacted after the event and were happy to give their input by means of one to one interviews.

## 4 Findings from the Research

- 4.1 It became clear that there are a number of involvement mechanisms taking place, but these could be applied with much better consistency and there were some gaps, particularly in our general needs and services where staff support is not provided on site. It was also evident that not all staff recognised these mechanisms or activities as being a form of 'client involvement'.

It is recognised that not all of the involvement mechanisms in use apply across all of Shape's activities as services and the needs of individuals vary.

- 4.3 All the participants expressed a desire to be involved with Shape in some way and were keen to explore more innovative ways to put their views across. All felt that Shape residents and clients had a right to participate and the majority could see the benefits this would bring. This would need to be done however in a way that would be attractive to those residents like activity days.
- 4.4 Although individuals thought that both focus groups and providing incentives were good ways to encourage participation, the turn out on the day of the research Focus Group was poor. Further investigations revealed that for this particular client group it was the 'here and now' that mattered.
- 4.5 Not surprisingly, the main areas where residents wanted more involvement concerned allocations and move on.

## **5. Principles**

- 5.1 Shape is committed to involving people and recognises that:

- Involvement adds immeasurable value to our business
- Involvement helps the service and business to reflect the needs of the people and communities it serves
- Involvement values and respects the people who need our services
- Involvement should be seen as an opportunity, not an obligation
- Involvement is integral to working with Shape's clients and residents
- Effective involvement requires imagination, creativity, energy and commitment.
- Support, training and coaching must be given to help clients to fully participate
- In short term support services the opportunity to continue involvement can be offered after leaving the service to people who are actively involved and engaged at the point of leaving

And that good People Involvement is about:

- Working together and making decisions in true partnership.
- Responding to feedback from the people who receive our services and letting people know
- Tailoring services to meet the needs of individuals
- Providing clear and timely information to people who use our services
- Supporting people to become involved at the level they wish and to the extent of their choice
- Being clear about what we are offering people who receive our services in terms of involvement.
- Publicising the positive outcomes of client involvement

And Involvement is:

- Accessible and diverse
- Easy
- Relevant
- Championed
- Real and genuine

5.2 Shape recognises the need to resource involvement and consultation within budget and staff capacity through allocation of

- Staff time
- Team meeting time
- Budget for venue/activity/refreshments
- Budget for incentive – vouchers
- Budget for marketing, literature and questionnaires, web costs if required

## **6. Motivating - Engaging - Involving**

6.1 Shape recognises that some of the people who need our services are hard to reach and may not be confident or motivated to get involved. It is the role of all staff to encourage and support involvement and having a say in the service and organisation.

6.2 Shape will give incentives and support formal opportunities for involvement such as meetings and focus groups by providing refreshments and vouchers where difficulties are experienced in getting people to get involved.

6.3 Shape will encourage good practice and innovative opportunities by providing a Staff Champion for Involving People in every service area.

6.3.1 Staff Champions will receive training on good practice in participation and involvement.

6.3.2 Staff Champions will actively promote involvement within their staff teams and client groups.

6.3.3 Staff Champions will lead on involvement opportunities in their services with the support of their manager and teams.

6.3.4 Staff Champions will encourage and recruit champions from Shape clients working together with them to raise the profile of client involvement and encourage involvement.

6.4 Shape will recruit and support people who receive our services to be Involving People Champions for their service.

6.4.1 The client Champion's role is to promote and encourage involvement and they are expected to actively participate in opportunities for involvement themselves.

6.5 Shape Board will provide a Champion Board member for Involvement.

## **7. Information and Feedback**

- 7.1 Shape recognises diversity and aims to help all people who receive our services to give and receive feedback and provide them with regular relevant information about their service and the organisation.
- 7.2 To this end Shape will provide a broad range of information and feedback to people receiving its services in a variety of different formats. These can be found at **appendix 3**.
- 7.3 Shape understands that feedback is a two way process and promises to report to people who receive our services on any feedback received and actions taken as a result of the feedback we received.

## **8. Formal Opportunities for Involving People in Policy & Decision Making**

- 8.1 Shape is committed to providing a range of opportunities for involvement and consultation to promote involvement in all levels of the business.
- 8.2 Shape encourages client Board membership in line with the standing orders.
  - 8.2.1 Staff will support client Board members with coaching, guidance, training and pre-Board briefings.
  - 8.2.2 Shape Board will provide mentors for all new Board members and recognises that some may need the support of officers as well as a mentor to facilitate attendance at meetings.
  - 8.2.3 A Framework for Recruitment, Induction and Support of client Board members is needed.
- 8.3 Likewise Shape encourages involvement in group-wide policy and strategy reviews and action groups and will similarly facilitate attendance and participation in these strategic processes.
- 8.4 In order to promote formal involvement and encourage high level participation with a view to future Board member recruitment Shape will establish a representative Panel of people receiving our services. The Panel will be facilitated by a Head of Service and supported by Staff Champions. The Panel will have the authority to request attendance of other managers and staff to provide information and assistance.
  - 8.4.1 The terms and rules and name of the Consultation and Involvement Panel will be developed in consultation with the members and reviewed annually.
  - 8.4.2 The panel will be responsible for overseeing development and delivery of Shape's Equality and Diversity in line with the group-wide strategy.
- 8.5 All new policies, procedures and plans will be subject to client consultation at the relevant level.

- Strategic Plans will be considered by client Board members as a minimum standard with broader consultation as appropriate to each plan.
- Policies and Procedures will be considered by the Consultation and Involvement Panel first.
- Ground rules and House rules, support and training assessment and planning paperwork along with other local service procedures will be consulted via local service resident groups and client focus groups and through individual feedback mechanisms as appropriate.

8.6 Shape will involve clients in recruitment for all staff posts through a client interview panel which interviews separately and contributes to overall scores and feedback.

## 9. Reviewing Involvement

- 9.1 Every 2 years Shape will ask people receiving our services how they want to be consulted and involved through questionnaires, resident groups and focus groups and the Panel.
- 9.2 To ensure that this strategy is a living document and reflects the views of the communities which Shape serves the Involving People Strategy will be reviewed in consultation with clients and the Consultation and Involvement Panel every year.

## 10. Actions

Actions arising from the research findings and consultation of staff and client and actions are as follows:

- 10.1 Shape requires a broad and varied range of strategies and mechanisms for involving people

**Action:** Future approaches and methods for involving people will be developed through a dialogue with individuals to understand their immediate needs, interests and concerns. Involvement will be 'grown' from clients' personal concerns and criticisms to the broader service planning, development and evaluation. We need to ensure consistent high quality and diversity and to challenge ourselves to continually evolve our strategy and practice.

**Action:** Capture and evaluate the mechanisms that are already taking place with a view to incorporating into a Shape involving people toolkit.

**Action:** Procedures that are relatively straightforward and can be undertaken in all schemes, for example exit interviews and satisfaction surveys, suggestion boxes and voice walls are standardised, actioned and outcomes regularly monitored.

- 10.2 The questionnaire received a 10% response. Although the response rate to the questionnaire may be typical it was disappointing.

**Action:** Further thorough consultation is undertaken with clients and staff over a 6 month period which will inform the first review of the Strategy. This will be a key task for the new Consultation and Involvement Panel.

- 10.3 Shape has no organisation wide formal consultation and involvement structure. This makes it difficult to develop and recruit new Board members and to ensure a representative section of consultation on relevant policies, strategies and other key documents and operational decisions.

**Action:** a Consultation and Involvement Panel is established for clients across Shape with Involvement Champions.

**Action:** Develop an easy read toolkit, in consultation with clients a 'ShapeBook' for Involving People that can be used by staff and people receiving our services. Method of development: a focus group or the Consultation and Involvement Panel to agree final draft by 31 May 2010.

- 10.4 Involving people is a high priority for Shape and will be actively encouraged and promoted in all our work.

**Action:** To identify a member of staff and a client within each service to 'champion' client involvement and a Board member champion.

**Action:** A brief role description is to be developed for the Champion roles.

**Action:** To ensure that involvement continues to be regular agenda item at all operational team meetings.

- 10.5 Staff teams need to acquire additional skills to give involvement focus and support.

**Action:** specific participation, involvement and motivation training is exploited and shared for new and existing staff.

**Action:** Champions receive external training to a higher level.

**Action:** Consultation guidelines outlining minimum standards for client consultation on new policies, procedures and strategies will be developed with the Panel by 31 March 2010.

- 10.6 Different ways of enabling participation and feedback by individuals and families who live in dispersed housing or do not live in our properties may be needed.

**Action:** Other mechanisms will be explored e.g. web based forums or notice boards, on line surveys.

**Action:** Engage the group-wide Communications team in developing opportunities for interactive participation through Shape's website.

**Action:** To increase the level of participation in one off consultation exercises, explore potential technical solutions for use of texting for quick polls as part of a range of single issue consultation where appropriate (i.e. not in isolation).

10.7 To keep Involvement a high priority, drive the strategy forward and dedicate resource time:

**Action:** Continue to embed the Involving People Strategy into the annual objectives of Service Managers, staff and service plans.

10.8 Shape needs to ensure fair access to client Board membership and encourage and support client Board members.

**Action:** Develop a Framework for Recruitment, Induction and Support of client Board members with the Head of Governance and in consultation with client Board members and Consultation and Involvement Panel

## **11. Milestones: Bringing the Strategy to Life**

11.1 Champions are recruited and in place in all areas of operation by 01 October 2009.

11.2 First Meeting of Consultation Panel by 01 November 2009

11.3 Capture and evaluate involvement mechanisms that are taking place by December 2009

11.4 Completion of detailed and broad client consultation on the strategy by 28 February 2010

11.5 Completion of first review of the strategy by 31 March 2010

11.6 Development of toolkit to support involvement by 31 May 2010

**Appendix 1 Current opportunities for involvement in Shape**

**Appendix 2 Research and Findings of Community Initiatives Officer**

**Appendix 3 Ways We Share Information with Clients**

**Appendix 4 – ShapeBook Involving People Toolkit – to be developed**

## **Appendix 1**

**Current opportunities for involvement in Shape include:**

- Regular monthly or bimonthly resident's meetings in our supported housing schemes
- Opportunities to feedback on our services formally at quarterly reviews
- Informal opportunities to feedback and influence the support package through weekly individual support sessions
- Suggestions boxes and files
- Complaints procedure widely publicised and encouraged
- Customer satisfaction questionnaires
- Snapshot questionnaires on issues
- Opportunities to be involved in group-wide reviews and action groups
- Formal participation in staff interviews (normally several recruitment drives per year)
- Participation in consultation events
- Periodic internal and external focus groups events
- Involvement in design, writing and production of service newsletters
- Involvement in fundraising events and activities
- Periodic consultation about how people who receive our services want to be consulted and involved
- Informal 'fun activities' with embedded consultation and involvement e.g. barbeque/breakfast club/smoothie afternoon etc

## **Appendix 2**

### **Developing a User Involvement Strategy – Shape Involvement Research (Abridged)**

In early 2008, the organisation undertook the challenge of developing a User Involvement Strategy which would be both a user friendly and meaningful document.

Hence what came about was the publication of two documents:

This one, which documents the journey which was undertaken, the process of how the findings were brought together and the findings themselves.

The ShapeBook which will be developed with clients of Shape about how they would like to be involved.

The beginning:

It was important firstly to ascertain and capture what was currently happening in Shape to engage with clients. The researcher made contact with all members of staff through email; providing a 'Learn over Lunch' introduction to Resident Involvement and followed this up with visits to schemes meeting with a selection of clients and staff on a one to one basis.

It became clear very early on that there were a number of involvement mechanisms taking place, what was even more apparent was that a number of clients and staff did not recognise these as being 'client' involvement. It was important to capture these so they could be recognised as some of the good work being undertaken. It is also important to add that the following list does not apply to all the Schemes (schemes and the needs and wants of individual clients are different) and in some cases these are often haphazard concerning the regularity of for example Questionnaires.

Methods already happening in the organisation included:

- Clients Forum
- Clients meetings
- Suggestion boxes
- Satisfaction surveys
- Consultation with residents prior to changes to internal policies
- Exit questionnaires
- Newsletters
- Involvement in staff recruitment
- Client on the Board with full voting rights

It is of course admirable to note that the SHAPE Board has representation from amongst its clients, what is not however clear is the mechanisms by which clients have the opportunity to feed into this process. If indeed the intention is for this to happen depending on how the role of that Board member is perceived.

A model that is often used to examine where an organisation sees itself now and in the future in terms of client involvement (and this can also relate to individual schemes) is 'The Ladder of Participation'.

Do Shape clients have:

**FULL CONTROL:** Clients control decision-making at the highest level.

**SHARING POWER:** Clients share decisions and responsibility; influencing and determining outcomes.

**PARTICIPATION:** Clients can make suggestions and influence outcomes.

**CONSULTATION:** Clients are asked what they think but have limited influence.

**INFORMATION:** Clients are told what is happening but have no influence.

**NO CONTROL:** Clients are passive consumers.

It is also important to determine not just what engagement is taking place but the 'quality' of engagement. Again this seemed to vary from scheme to scheme with some residents not identifying engagement opportunities . . . . 'there are none'; to those who fully embraced them . . . . 'it really helped me come out of my shell'.

The Clients ShapeBook looks in more detail at how clients want to be involved.

### **Ensuring ownership and 'buy in' for the Strategy**

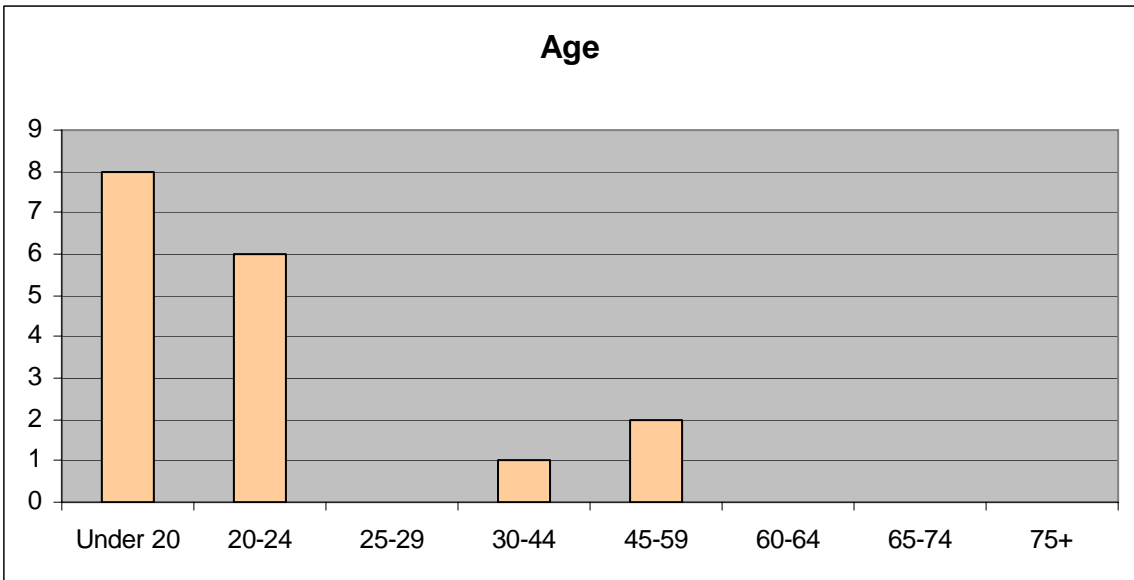
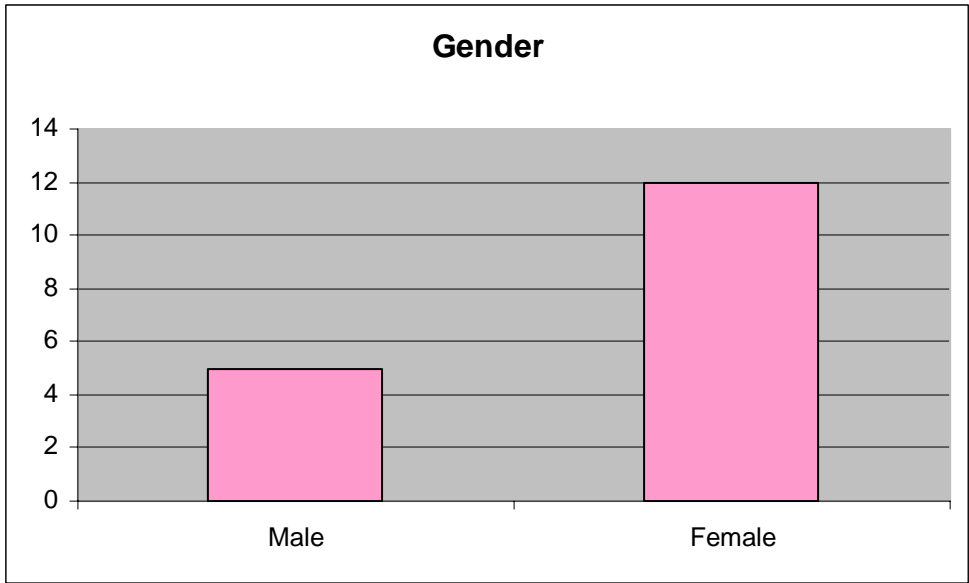
Initially a Questionnaire was devised for Clients which all Shape staff were asked for their views and input on.

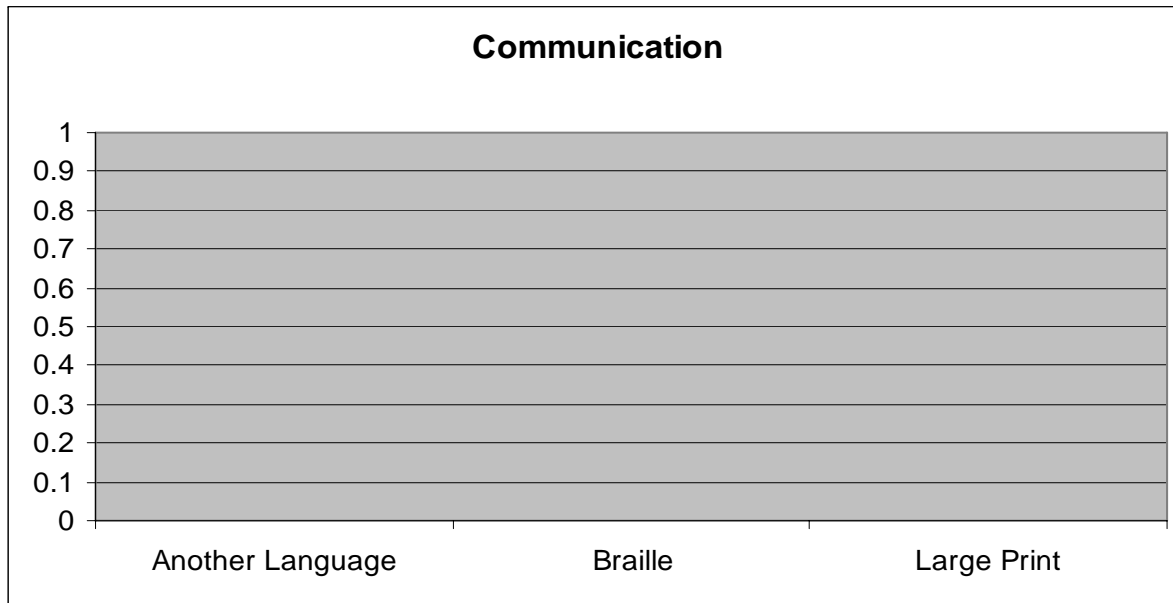
The Questionnaire was sent to all Shape Clients with a FREEPOST envelope offering the chance to win a £25.00 voucher. Support was offered if needed to complete the Questionnaire either from the Clients Support Worker or by the researcher. (see Appendix A: letter) (Appendix B: Questionnaire).

Of the 152 questionnaires that were sent out

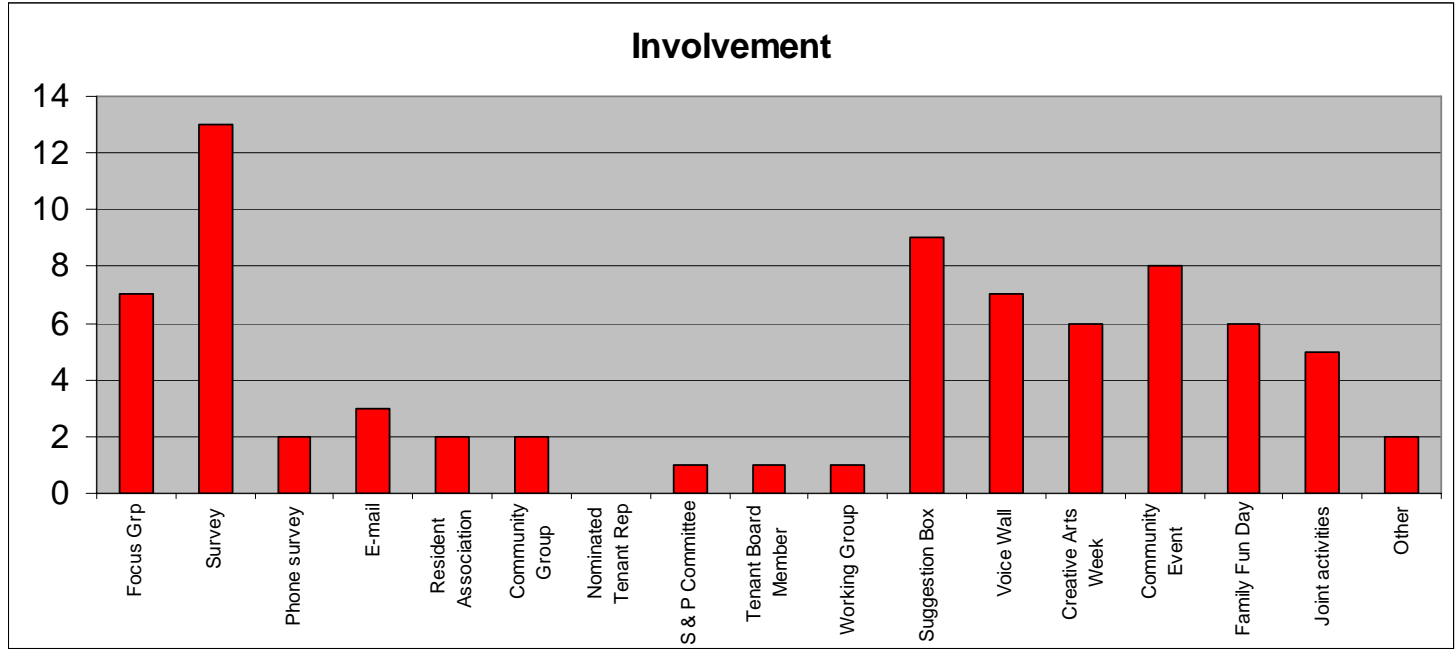
17 were completed and returned to Shape; these were all completed independently (just over 10%).

From the questionnaires returned the majority were female and under the age of 24.

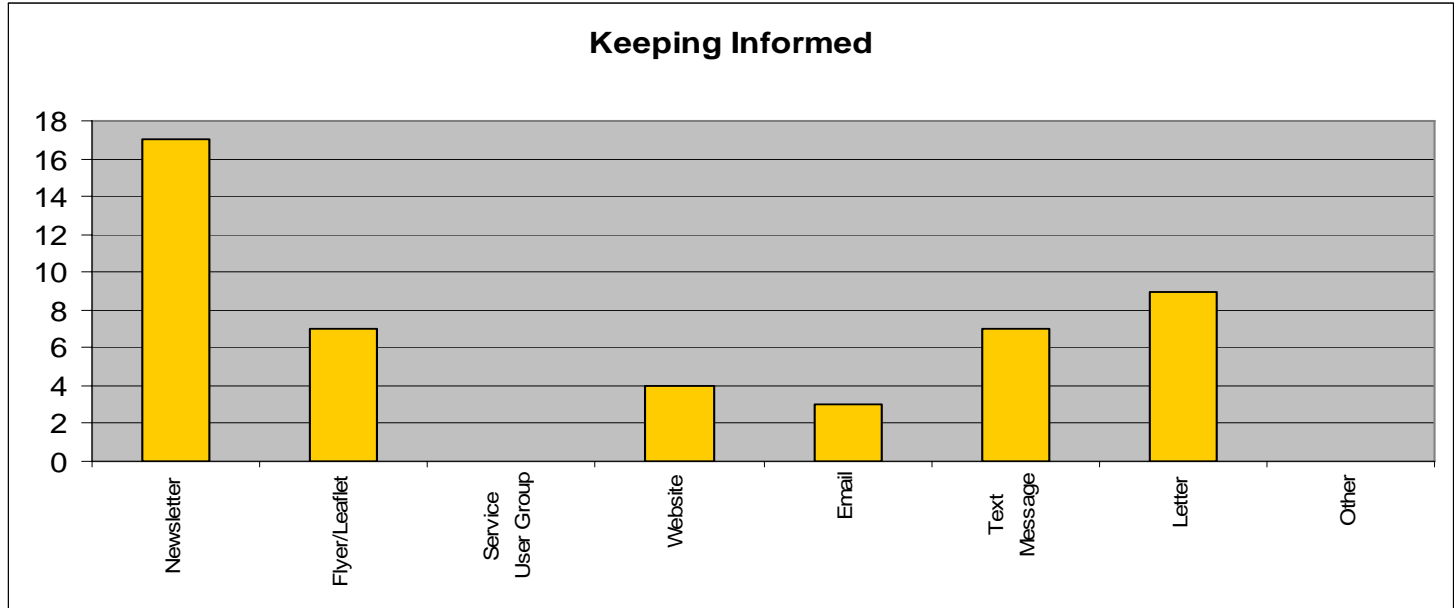




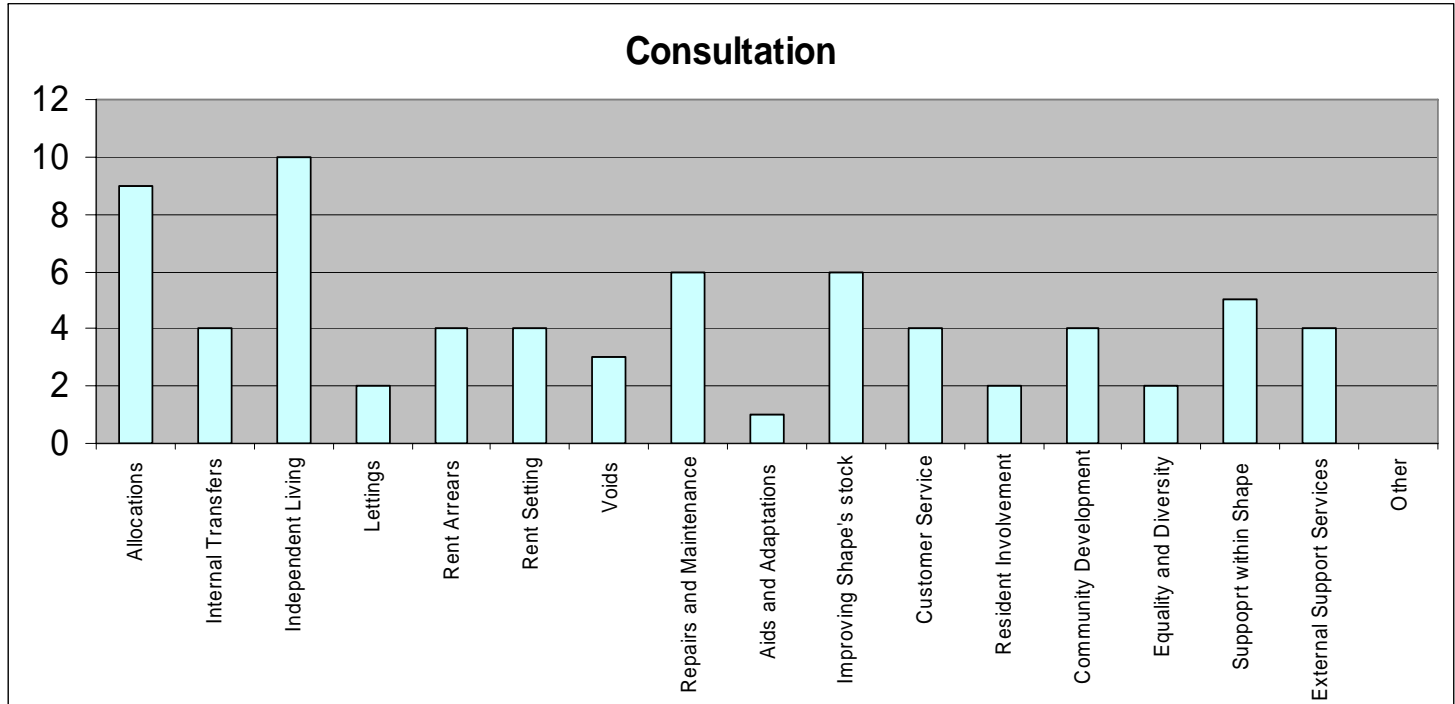
None of the residents required additional or alternative forms of communication from Shape.



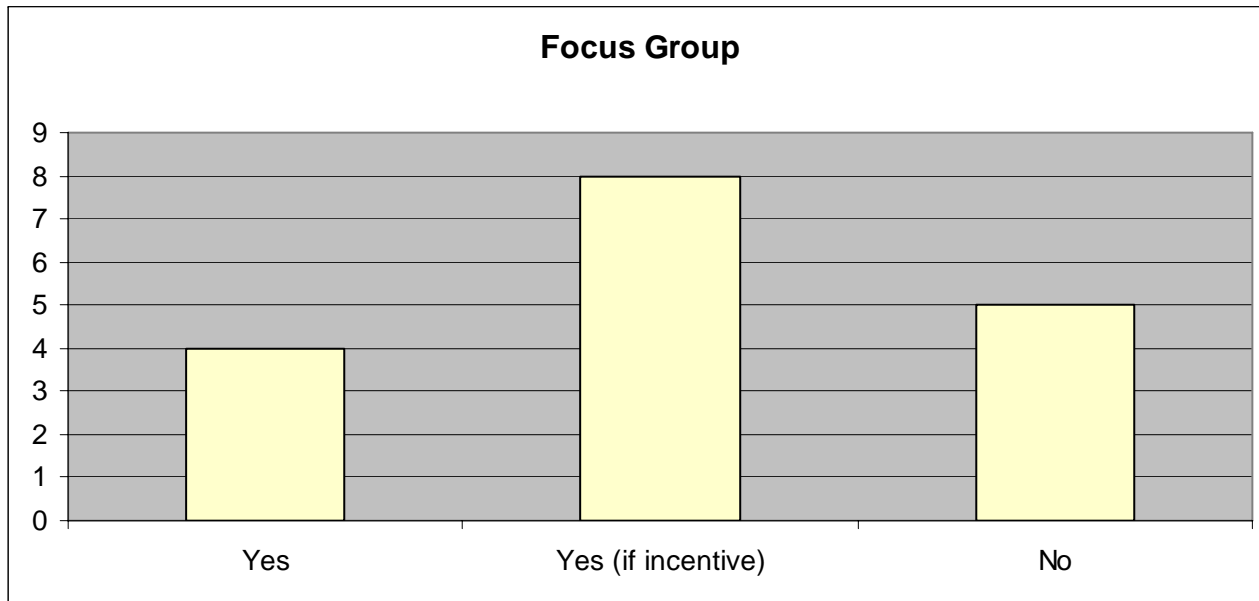
The majority of Clients would like to get involved further with Shape; the most popular options were answering additional questionnaires / surveys, the use of a suggestion box, getting involved in a community event and being involved in a Focus Group



Most Clients were happy to be kept informed with regards to all things Shape in the usual methods such as Flyers / Leaflets and Newsletters; however a few were happy to try less used methods such as text message and email.



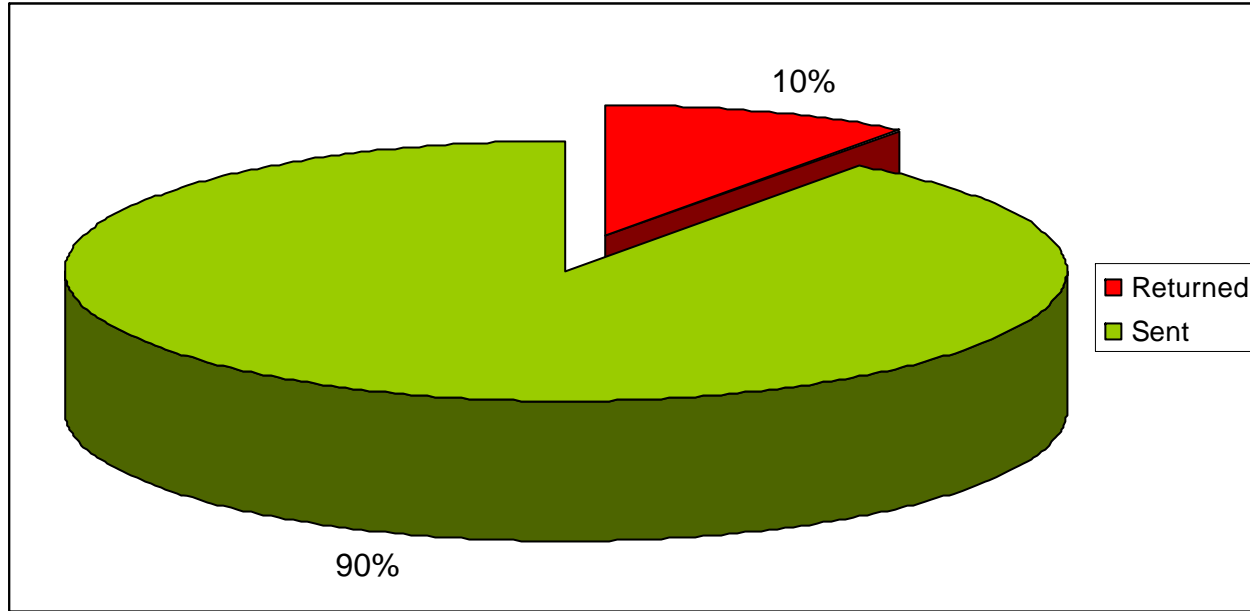
When asked what particular service areas clients would like to be consulted about there was a cross the board range of responses with the most popular being Independent Living and Allocations.

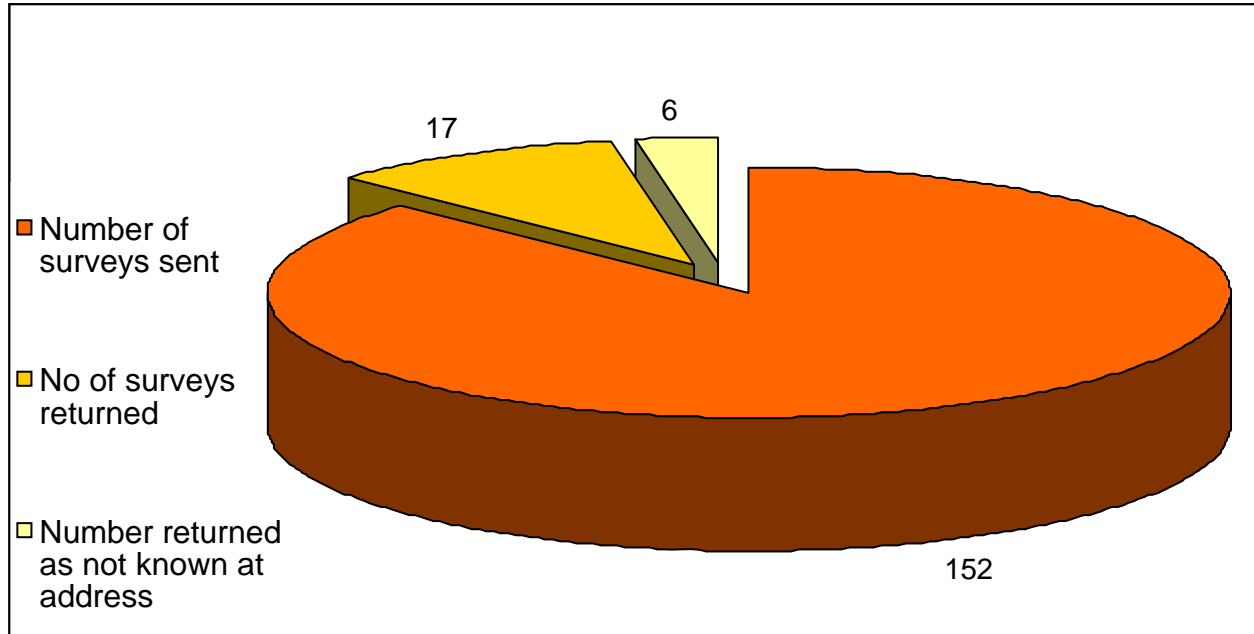


Most residents were happy to attend further consultation in the form of a Focus Group, especially if there was an incentive.

It may be thought that the response rate was poor given the numbers of Questionnaires sent out. However 10% is average for a typical response rate.

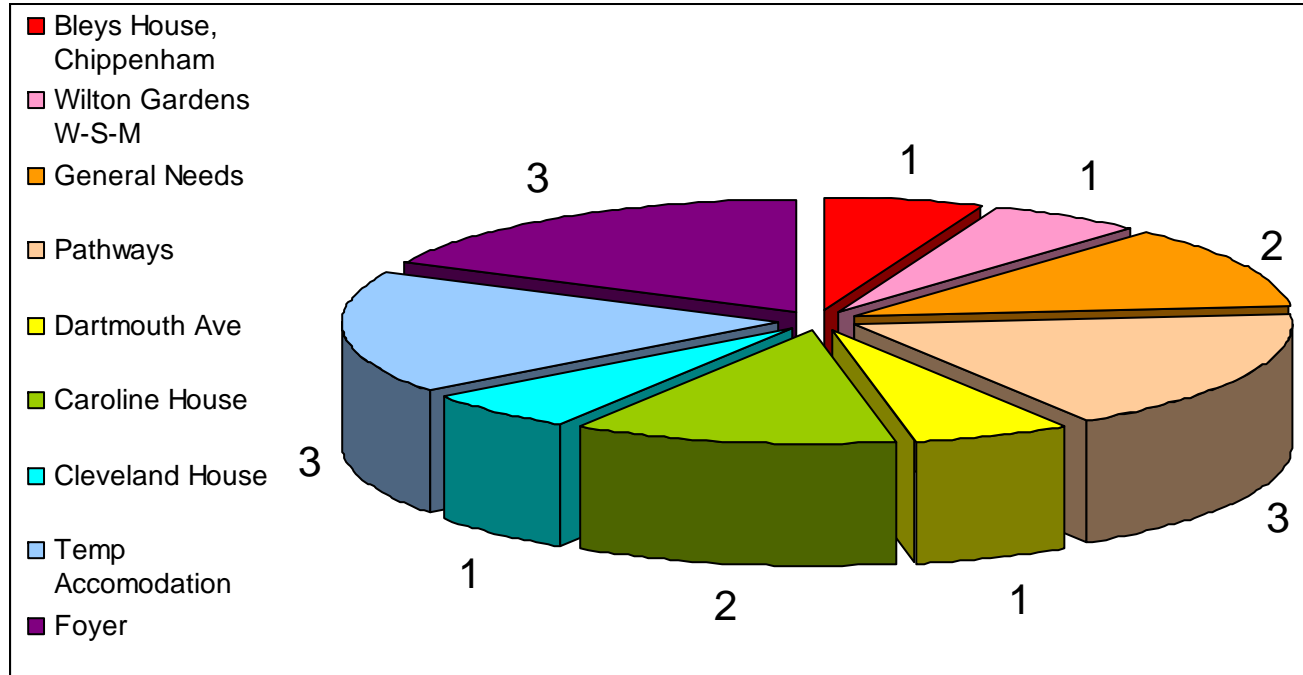
Breakdown of surveys





Although a small number of Questionnaires were returned; it was very pleasing to note that of those there was an excellent cross reference of Shapes Clients.

**Breakdown of surveys by area**



Those Clients who indicated their willingness to be further consulted were invited to take part in a Focus Group; to look at Client involvement in more depth, with lunch provided and as a 'Thank You' a £10.00 voucher. (Appendix C: letter of invite) (Appendix D: Outline of Focus Group session).

Attendance at the Focus Group was poor. When potential participants were contacted to ascertain why they didn't attend the responses ranged from illness to other things cropping up.

On a positive note – all those contacted were happy to give their input by means of one to one discussions; either carried out face to face or over the telephone. These participants did not receive any incentive.

In all a further 7 Shape Clients gave more in depth feedback further to the Questionnaire.

This group became the main steering group for the development of Shape’s User Involvement Strategy. They were all given assurance that their views and comments would be treated confidentially. Breakdown of the ‘Focus Group’ participants were as follows:

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Under 20</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Under 20</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>20 – 24</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Under 20</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>5 (prev SU)</b>	<b>20 – 24</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>6 (GN)</b>	<b>45 – 59</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Under 20</b>	<b>F</b>

The main themes of the Focus Group discussions were:

Moving into your accommodation

How it felt

What worked / didn’t work

What could be put in place to help new residents

Have things changed since moving in

Services provided by Shape

What services come to mind when you think of Shape

Which are the most important

Experience of dealing with Shape about these services

Was there a perception of being treated differently – positive / negative

Being involved with Shape

What ways can residents views be expressed to Shape

Does Shape publicise enough how residents can give their views / participate

Is communication clear / unclear?

How would you like to be kept informed?

What type of person would become involved in resident participation

Is participation a right

What are the benefits of participation

What are the disadvantages of participation

Why do few (young) residents get involved

How can Shape help to improve (young) residents participation

Service areas that you would like to be involved in

Being involved further

Throughout discussions the term 'resident' was used as opposed to 'client'.

## **Discussions**

### Moving into your accommodation

The majority of residents felt the initial move into Shape accommodation was a positive experience with one stating the feeling of being alone was not good. Two residents felt that the standard of their accommodation was not good stating that residents were restricted in what colours they could use to decorate their room, (magnolia) – this prevented the resident from making their room feel like home. Some questioned the rules that applied – it was felt that this differed from Scheme to Scheme (the Guests rule was brought up). The question raised was should this be a standard rule throughout Shape's schemes?

It was felt that Shape staff were initially very supportive and approachable with a good induction process but there was a feeling from some that this declined as time went on. It was also felt that repairs requests were slow and the process lengthy. Some said that no appointments were made. There was also a feeling amongst some that there was often disagreement between residents and Key Workers about when they were 'ready' to move on. It was felt that to help new residents they could be offered a mentor other than a member of staff – somebody who had lived in the Scheme for a while.

### Services provided by Shape

The majority of residents were clear that Shape was a housing provider although one thought that their Scheme was a 'safe' house. Some clearly recognised and valued the support element that Shape provided and positively commented on the benefits they felt they gained from this 'the most important thing is knowing someone's there for you'. Just over half felt they were treated differently though not always in a negative way. Repairs is a big issue with most experiencing difficulties at certain times during their tenancy.

### Being involved with Shape

All the participants expressed a desire to be involved with Shape in some way even though in some cases they felt that this may be detrimental to them. They were keen to explore more innovative ways to put their views across one popular suggestion was a Voice Wall – although some felt that their Schemes would find it difficult to accommodate this method. Incentivising residents was thought to be good – even by means of recording their involvement for accreditation purposes. All felt that Shape residents had a right to participate and the majority could see the benefits this would bring. This would need to be done however in a way that would be attractive to those residents like Activity Days.

### Researchers notes:

It is worth noting that although Focus Groups rated highly as a mechanism for how Clients of Shape would like to be involved; the turn out on the day of the Focus Group

was poor. Further investigations revealed that for this particular client group it was the 'here and now' that mattered.

It became apparent that it is no good setting up a meeting for a weeks time (even with a reminder phone call an hour before the meeting) – so much happens for this client group between now and that day. It was truly I believe their intention to attend on that day – but other events / issues became more important / urgent. Even the incentivisation of a shopping voucher didn't help.

Therefore – you have to engage this client group there and then – on site if you like. This was done by means of a telephone call; can we meet / talk now or in half an hours time. Everyone was happy to do this and willingly gave up their time with no incentives needed.

### Interview with the Shape Client Board Member

Craig Whittock a resident of Shape has been a member of the Board of Management for nearly two years. From my interview with him it is apparent that he is clear on his role and is committed to the work of Shape. He is keen to improve his knowledge of the work of the organisation and recognises the potential barriers for young people to be involved at this level.

### **The principles of good Client Involvement**

Being responsive to Clients' feedback and aspirations.

Tailoring services to meet the needs of individuals.

Providing clear and timely information to Clients'.

Supporting people to become involved at the level they wish.

Where possible working at a local level with Schemes and their communities.

A commitment to providing the appropriate resources.

Working together and making decisions in true partnership.

Being clear about what we are offering Clients in terms of involvement.

Ensuring communication with Clients is clear and jargon free.

Equality of access to our services.

Publicising the positive outcomes of resident involvement.

### **Recommendations arising from this Report**

To put in place and continue to explore both recognised and innovative ways that Clients of Shape can become involved in their **local** Schemes / Projects.

- Conduct annual satisfaction surveys about the quality of our services particular to their local Scheme.
- Keep Clients informed about all significant changes to their service by means of a Newsletter and / or Flyer seeking the input from any interested residents of the Scheme in terms of Newsletter / Flyer design.
- Seek feedback from Clients who are leaving the service through Exit Questionnaires.
- Ask Clients for feedback on a quarterly basis through their individual quarterly support reviews.
- Feedback to Clients by means of one to ones / Flyers / Newsletters about what they said and any action we have taken to change the service / Scheme as a result of their input.
- Review house rules with Clients every 6 months through means of Voice Walls / Suggestion boxes (colour schemes for room decoration / guests)
- Every 6 months to engage with residents of each Scheme in a more innovative way for example: Family Fun Days (Bloomfield House); Creative Arts Week (Dartmouth Avenue); Community Open Day (The Foyer) recognising that each Scheme (and residents) is different – more information available in the 'ShapeBook'.
- To recognise and where possible involve organisations with experience to engage particular client groups, for example: NESAs (North East Somerset Arts); DAFBY (Democratic Action for B&NES Youth); The Childrens' Society. (These organisations may also be able to attract funding opportunities).
- To offer the opportunity for more 'regular' residents in our accommodation schemes to form recognised 'Resident Groups'; these would be reviewed annually.
- To consult Clients on any major changes before final decisions are made wherever possible using creative ways to encourage active participation. (see ShapeBook).
- In Schemes that provide training to give recognition and accreditation to those residents who do become involved.
- To provide residents of all Schemes the opportunity to make suggestions regarding their home by means of the website / Voice Walls / Suggestion boxes / Creative ways (design a postcard; drama; poetry; photography etc) – see ShapeBook.
- To engage with all General Needs tenants and explore ways for them to become involved or link into existing Resident / Community Groups in their area.

- To look at developing Focus Groups / Forums within each Scheme to consult with Clients on Independent Living; Allocations and Repairs & Maintenance. Timescales to be determined.
- To involve Clients of each Scheme in the recruitment process for new staff.
- To provide training and a budget to support residents of each Scheme to be involved at a level which suits them.
- To consider incentivising Clients to be involved; this may differ from Scheme to Scheme and may not necessarily be in the form of vouchers etc; it could be accreditation / recognition in some form.
- To examine current information given to new tenants – is it in plain English / ‘layman’s’ terms.
- For those Schemes without communal facilities, identify a place where Clients can come together to meet to discuss issues of importance to them. Allocate a budget for this if necessary.
- Publicise how Clients can become involved. Use Flyers designed by young people.
- Use existing Fun Days / Barbeques etc as a means of engaging Clients in a positive way.

#### To maximise the involvement of Clients in the governance of Shape

- To set up a Strategy & Policy Committee (obviously a funkier name needed) consisting of interested representatives from across Shapes schemes. This will provide an opportunity for Clients to network / ask Shape for information / put forward proposals that will benefit not only individual Schemes but residents as a whole (including General Needs). This Committee would also take responsibility for nominating the Shape Client to the Board. The Board would formally recognise this Committee and a procedure would be developed to enable the Committee to take issues to the Board and vice-versa.
- Inform Shape Clients of decisions that have been taken at the Board.
- Ensure governance training is available for those with aspirations to become involved at a more strategic level.
- To make available clear information on what being a Board Member involves.
- To examine the possibility of making Board Meetings more ‘young person’ friendly. Possibly take Board Meetings out to Schemes.
- Invite all Shape Clients to an Annual Event to feedback results of satisfaction surveys / policy changes etc.
- To provide the opportunity for Shape Clients to influence the Fund-Raising programme.
- To draw up an Action Plan with targets to include: detailed planned activities; milestones for actions; Lead Officers and targeted Clients; Costings / Budget; measures of success and how they will be collected.
- To review this document and targets set on an annual basis. Wider targets can be reviewed less frequently.
- To identify a member of staff within each Scheme to ‘champion’ resident involvement.
- To identify a budget for ‘Client’ involvement.

#### General

- 1 To appreciate that the involvement of Shape Clients is not just about the end result and to recognise the development and achievement of individuals through the process.
- 2 To explore how Clients can become involved in developing the Shape website and incorporate a residents page.
- 3 Provide training / awareness courses for all new Shape staff (and current staff who would benefit from it) on resident participation.
- 4 Give a commitment to Client involvement from the highest level.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Ways we currently share information with clients and gather feedback**

- Newsletters which involve clients in the contribution of articles, production and distribution

- Regular resident meetings frequency, style and location to be agreed and reviewed biannually with residents
- Website
- Notice Boards
- Written correspondence
- Snap shot single issue questionnaires
- Annual Satisfaction Surveys
- Quarterly feedback on services through the support plan, tenancy and training review process
- Voice walls and suggestion boxes
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Embedded involvement and feedback opportunities in activities (social, art, multi-media, sport, any group activities)