

## National Tenant Organisations – Tenant Panel guide survey

The Tenant Panel guide survey was carried out to assess opinions about the DCLG funded National Tenant Organisation guide “Tenant Panels: Options for Accountability” and related matters.

Key summary points from the survey include:

- 84.6% of respondents considered the Tenant Panel guide to be either very or reasonably helpful
- just under two thirds of respondents considered that some tenants and tenant participation staff had read some or all of the guide (65.4% and 60.6% respectively). Just under a half of respondents (45.2%) considered that senior management staff had seen it, and over a third (39.4%) considered that their Chief Executive or Director of Housing had.
- the general sections of the guide – options for Tenant Panels; why they are important; and common principles behind them – were found to be particularly helpful (by 52.9%, 47.1% and 40.4% respectively). Significant numbers (33.7% and 30.8%) also found the “overcoming challenges” and “resources” sections helpful.
- over three quarters of respondents (76.9%) found the level of prescription in the guide to be “about right”. A significant minority (14.4%) considered the guide was not prescriptive enough.
- just under half of respondents (49%) said that tenants have discussed with their landlord whether one or more Tenant Panel will be set up to deal with complaints.
- a slightly smaller number (44.2%) said that tenants are interested in setting up a “collaborative” Tenant Panel (ie. one involving tenants from more than one landlord) or are they already doing it.
- just over a third (35.6%) said they had considered the NTO approved scheme

Within the time period, we received 104 responses to the survey as follows:

	Council housing		Housing association	
	Directly managed	ALMO or TMO	Directly managed	ALMO or TMO
Tenants	6	11	39	5
Staff	5	4	19	
Others	3	6	2	1
Totals	14	21	60	6
Percentage	13.5%	20.2%	57.7%	5.8%

NB. “tenants” throughout this survey summary also includes responses from leaseholders and other residents

There was one response from a co-op member, one from a TMO member who did not specify their landlord, and one response did not answer the question. Of the others shown above, 4 were responses from meetings between tenants and staff.

Respondents considered that the following stakeholders had read some or all of the guide:

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Some tenants	68	65.4%
Tenant participation staff	63	60.6%
Senior management staff	47	45.2%
Chief Executives, Directors of Housing or equivalent	41	39.4%
Some frontline staff	21	20.2%
Complaints handling staff	20	19.2%
Governing body members	16	15.4%
Others	9	8.7%
Don't know	19	18.3%

Respondents indicated that they considered the guide to be helpful as follows:

	Council housing			Housing association			Other	Totals	
	Tenants	Staff	Oth	Tenants	Staff	Oth		Nos	%
Very helpful	6	2	3	13	7	2	1	34	32.7
Reasonably helpful	4	8	5	24	11	1	1	54	51.9
Neither	1	2		5	2			10	9.6
Unhelpful	1			1				2	1.9
Very unhelpful				1				1	1.0
No response	3							3	2.9

Respondents found the following sections of the Tenant Panel guide to be particularly helpful:

	Numbers	Percentage
Options for Tenant Panels	55	52.9%
Why are Tenant Panels important?	49	47.1%
Common principles behind Tenant Panels	42	40.4%
Overcoming challenges	35	33.7%
Resources	32	30.8%
Directory of case studies	24	23.1%
What if landlords don't support Tenant Panels?	23	22.1%
Ministerial foreword	13	12.5%
No response	4	3.8%

Respondents were asked if they considered the guide to be “too prescriptive”, “about right” or “not prescriptive enough”:

	Council housing			Housing association			Other	Totals	
	Tenants	Staff	Oth	Tenants	Staff	Oth		Nos	%
Too prescriptive	1	1		1				3	2.9
About right	12	9	7	33	14	3	2	80	76.9
Not enough	1	2	1	6	5			15	14.4
No response	1			4	1			6	5.8

Respondents were asked if tenants and the landlord have discussed whether one or more Tenant Panel will be set up to deal with complaints:

	Council housing			Housing association			Other	Totals	
	Tenants	Staff	Oth	Tenants	Staff	Oth		Nos	%
Yes	7	7	3	18	13	3		51	49.0
No	6	5	4	14	6		1	36	34.6
Don't know	2		1	10			1	14	13.5
No response				2	1			3	2.9

Respondents were asked if tenants are interested in setting up a “collaborative” Tenant Panel (ie. one involving tenants from more than one landlord) or are they already doing it:

	Council housing			Housing association			Other	Totals	
	Tenants	Staff	Oth	Tenants	Staff	Oth		Nos	%
Yes	7	4	4	19	9	2	1	46	44.2
No	4	2	4	9	5	1		25	24.0
Don't know	4	6		16	6		1	33	31.7

Respondents were asked if they had “considered the NTO approved scheme”:

	Council housing			Housing association			Other	Totals	
	Tenants	Staff	Oth	Tenants	Staff	Oth		Nos	%
Yes	5	2	3	13	12	2		37	35.6
No	5	7	4	11	7	1		35	33.7
Don't know	5	3	1	20	1		2	32	30.8

In response to the question asking what parts of the guide respondents found particularly helpful, the following additional comments were received:

- most of the content
- the entire guide is very helpful
- impact assessment, we have used this way of assessing to assess all our involvement mechanisms
- enforcing fairness, freedom of information and tenant control is now, and will still be impossible the document is useless without a strong regulator and proper oversight.

- since the demise of Housing Corporation each regulator has been less and less supportive of tenants and increasingly unconnected with maintaining standards and examining business practices and provisions of landlords. Co-regulation in the sector is a joke. Its worse than lip service.
- our housing association sets up panels only on its own terms selecting who goes and how many on each panel
- not being on customer service group I could not answer this.
- there were four comments that the respondent had not seen the guide!