

Introduction



- **Kai Jackson BSc (Hons) Psych Coun (Open), GMBPSS**
- Social housing tenant
- Chair of BCHG resident scrutiny panel
- Tpas Associate/ Consultant
- Tenant Advisory Panel (TAP) member (NHF)
- Parent governor
- Independent Committee Member
- Centre For the New Midlands Housing and Communities board member
- Trainee Board member
- Project author, **Is There a Seat at the Table: Ethnic Minority Voices in Tenant Engagement**

Project summary and outline.

- Started over 2 years ago
- Lack of diverse representation from tenants (local/national)
- Done research into why? Looked for data (NOTHING)
- Tpas sponsored the project Is there a Seat at the Table: Ethnic Minorities Voices in Tenant Engagement.
- Support from NHF, CIH, Inside Housing, MHCLG
- Launched 5th Feb '24, 370+ participants filled out survey, 3 focus groups
- Share findings with MHCLG and RSH
- Report is now available to download at [Tpas :: Tenant engagement experts](#) and [Homepage - UK Collaborative Centre For Housing Evidence](#)

Over half of people answered (57%) don't consider their organisations tenant influencing structures reflective of the ethnic makeup of the overall tenant base.

I don't feel like it would make a change. Tenant panels have been around for some time and nothing changes - in fact it gets worse each year. What landlords should do is to take each tenant interaction as a learning moment. Good or positive interactions.'

'Because I don't think my opinions/ contributions would be truly valued. Do they really want tenant involvement or is this a tick box exercise

Findings

Almost all respondents (95%) expressed that their organisation could do more to attract tenants from ethnic minority groups to participate in their tenant influencing structures



Over three quarters of tenants (78%) feel that their landlord should do more to attract a diverse range of tenants such as those from different ethnic backgrounds to participate more in the activities that help to shape their decision.

' I didn't know there was any form of engagement.'

We struggle to engage with what is a **totally chaotic group of people** who have probably previously had bad experiences of Housing associations

Every BAME tenant brings a new prospective of issues they face in 'their world'

There is a problem over staff willingness to welcome Res Eng in any form - we have a significant issue with appropriate culture and attitudes towards tenants . Staff prefer to operate at a distance and to see themselves as somehow 'in charge' of tenant

I believe that the organisation does not prevent them from taking part but they have not in the past come to the fore. At a recent gathering of interested tenant for a new senior panel I happily noted that among those present there were several interested

We don't use reflective practice as a larger service for tenants. I have experience where tenants have been discriminated against because of their ethnicity.

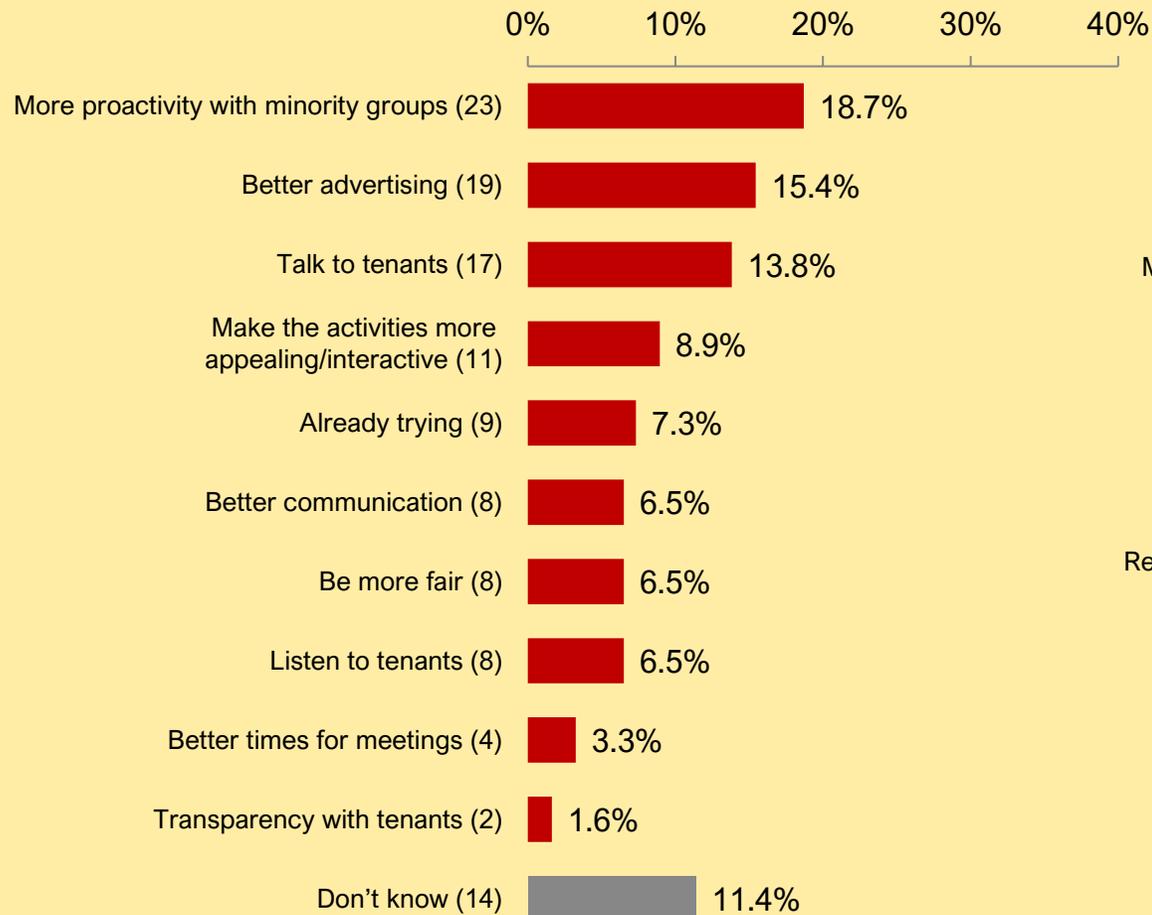


Both tenants and landlords have similar ideas for driving participation



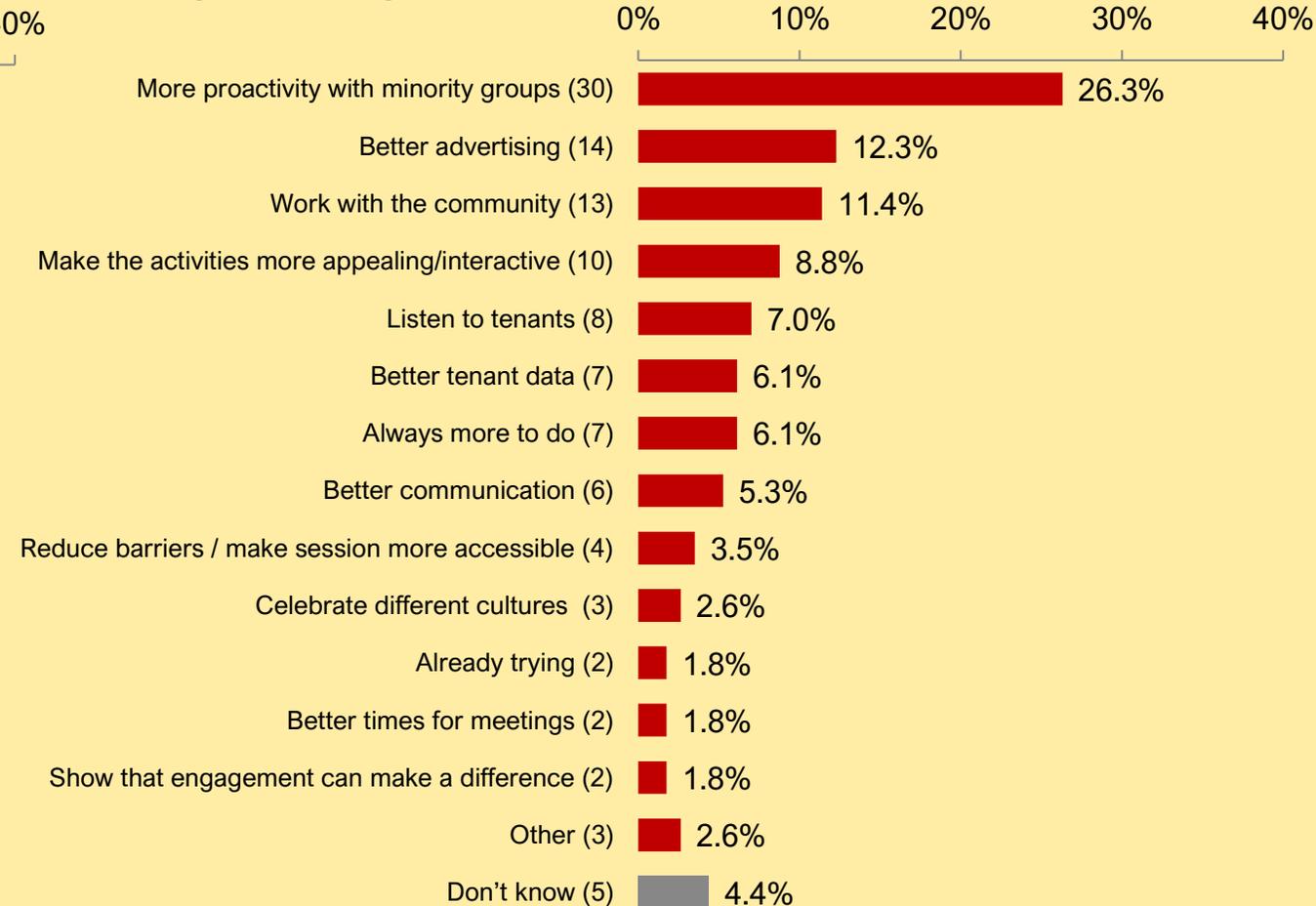
Tenants

What do you think your landlord could do to get a more diverse range of tenants involved in tenant participation activities?



Landlords

Do you think your organisation could do more to attract tenants from ethnic minority groups to participate in your tenant influencing structures? What do you think they could do?



Key Findings



Targeted Communication and Outreach- tailoring communication for accessibility based on the audience and proactively engaging communities. **Building Trust and Respect-** which is something all organisations should strive for with tenants and vice versa. **Addressing Systemic Barriers-** being understanding and open to the barriers faced by ethnic minority tenants with an outlook to reducing them. **Enhancing Staff Competency-** supporting staff with the tools and training to fulfil their job role, and engage and support ethnic minority tenants. **Strengthening Data Systems-** poor data systems reduce means poor communication as information isn't accessible and shared in the correct way to support tenants needs. **Allocating Resources and Funding-** looking into funding and partnerships to support engagement with ethnic minority tenants. **Community-Led Initiatives-** empower tenants to co-creation engagement efforts and lead focus groups or cultural activities.

The T.A.B.L.E Principal



T	Tailored training	Training, learning about different cultures and understanding the person/people who live in the home and community.
A	Actively engaging with communities	Intentional interactions between targeted communities and public decision makers (community champions). Offer support to community events where possible which will lead to stronger engagement and a stronger sense of community.
B	Bringing everyone into the conversation.	Ensures that the diverse voices of tenants are heard in the decision-making process
L	Listening to voices.	All voices matter as they provide perspective, experience and knowledge.
E	Ethnic Minorities	We use 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except the white British group. Ethnic minorities include white minorities, such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.

Can the T.A.B.L.E principals be measured?



Implementing the TABLE principals will support in building **trust** with tenants from ethnic minority backgrounds, increase community cohesion, positively impact a culture of inclusion within your organization, support personal development of staff, better tailor the use of resources and finance, and support with recruitment of ethnic minority tenants for formal/informal engagement.

The principals can be implemented not only in EDI planning but also overall corporate planning, as the TABLE principals will look at financial planning of services provided, training offered, and building local resourcing. It will also look into community collaborations and the governance structure, as it may evidence a gap in tenant inclusion and lived experience assurance to be provided to the board and regulatory compliance.

An Interactive Guide: Is There a Seat at the Table? Ethnic Minority Voices in Tenant Engagement

BY DEWBIEN PLUMMER

(Vol. 4 as of February 2025)



WHAT TENANTS WANT

Tenants are asking for more visibility from their landlord in the form of door knocking, making welfare calls, knowing who their housing officer is and timely responses to their queries. The grassroots approach on an authentic scale, rather than a large approach which seems disingenuous was a shared concern from tenants during the focus group sessions.



RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve engagement, the report recommends:

BETTER COMMUNICATION & AWARENESS

Clearer promotion of engagement opportunities, using inclusive and accessible formats.

BUILD TRUST & RESPECT

Meaningful, action-oriented engagement that values tenant input.

IMPROVE ACCESS

Provide more flexible and informal ways for tenants to get involved.

IMPROVE CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Invest in staff training and knowledge-building to better engage diverse communities.

STRENGTHEN DATA & INSIGHT

Use robust data collection to shape targeted support.

COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES

Empower tenants to lead and shape engagement efforts.

T.A.B.L.E. PRINCIPLES

Adopt the T.A.B.L.E. framework to guide tenant engagement.

- T: Tailored Training.
- A: Actively Engage Communities.
- B: Bring Everyone into the Conversation.
- L: Listening to Voices.
- E: Ethnic Minorities.

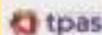
THE ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS
tpas

WHY THIS REPORT?



Kai Jackson, (report author), was elected as a scrutiny panel chair in 2021, and quickly noticed the absence of ethnic minority tenants in engagement spaces. Often the only tenant of colour at sector events, she saw this as a sector-wide issue.

Kai believes tenant participation is crucial—not just for tenants to shape decisions about their homes and communities, but for landlords to benefit from diverse lived experiences. Without inclusive engagement, landlords miss key insights that could improve services and strengthen relationships. Fair representation is essential for meaningful change.



Recognising these barriers, **tpas England** was keen to support this research. As a national tenant engagement organisation, they see the challenges ethnic minority tenants face and know that better inclusion leads to better housing services for all.



For the **UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE)**, this project addresses a critical gap in research. They acknowledge there is still much to do to ensure tenant voices shape housing policy and hope this report drives real, lasting change.

TPAS

tpas, the Tenant Participation Advisory Service, is England's leading tenant engagement expert, promoting and supporting tenant involvement in social housing since 1988.

CaCHE

The **UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE)** is a multidisciplinary partnership between academia, housing policy, and practice, providing evidence to tackle the UK's housing challenges.



Responses were received from landlords and tenants across England. 2/3 of the respondents were from Housing Associations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The **report**, a collaboration between Tpas and the CaCHE, explores why ethnic minority tenants are underrepresented in formal engagement within the UK social housing sector and identifies ways to improve participation.

Many tenants are unaware of engagement opportunities, distrust landlords, or feel their voices are ignored. Past negative experiences and perceptions of selective participation further discourage involvement.

Landlords face challenges in reaching diverse communities, including a lack of resident data, unclear Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) strategies, and limited resources. Staff often feel unsure how to engage tenants from different cultural backgrounds effectively.

Residents want more direct, grassroots engagement—door-knocking, welfare calls, and visible housing officers—rather than broad, impersonal initiatives.

The **report** recommends better communication, stronger trust, more inclusive engagement approaches, staff training on engaging diverse communities, improved data collection, and community-led initiatives to ensure all tenants have a voice in shaping services.

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS?

TENANTS

- Not aware of opportunities or how to get involved.
- Don't feel as though it would make a difference / Issues discussed aren't relevant to what they want to talk about.
- Bad past experiences.
- Feel landlords are selective as to who can get involved.

LANDLORDS

- Staff are unsure how to approach and engage with ethnic minority tenants (cultural competence)
- Data Gaps: Landlords do not have complete resident profiles & still don't know who's there.
- Lack of well-defined EDI strategies.
- Lack of finance and resources.

We regulate for a viable, efficient, and well governed social housing sector able to deliver quality homes and services for current and future tenants. We regulate at the landlord level to drive improvement in how landlords operate.

We regulate based on our view of the level of risk. This means that we may look at both how likely it is that a poor outcome will happen and what impact it would have if it does happen.

Our approach to regulating landlords is different for large landlords (those who own 1,000 or more social homes) and small landlords (those who own fewer than 1,000 social homes)

- [Neighbourhood and Community Standard](#)
- 2 April 2024
- [Safety and Quality Standard](#)
- 2 April 2024
- [Tenancy Standard](#)
- 2 April 2024
- [Transparency, Influence and Accountability \(including Tenant Satisfaction Measures\)](#)
- 2 April 2024
- [Consumer standards Code of Practice](#)

RSH in England

[Regulatory standards for landlords - GOV.UK](#)



How can implementing this report support your organisation

RS1

c)

Sets and delivers measurable, evidence-based commitments across all areas of its business in relation to equality, diversity, and inclusion (including anti-racism and tackling hate crime)

f)

Can demonstrate the difference tenant involvement and feedback makes to strategic decision-making

RS4

The organisation's culture supports and empowers tenants to influence the design and delivery of services

RS6

a)

Determines its strategic approach to value for money and can demonstrate that it achieves value for money in delivering its strategy and services to stakeholders, including tenants

RS3

b)

Ensures that services are fair and deliver equitable outcomes for tenants in response to their individual needs

RS7

a)

Sets financial plans which enable it to deliver its strategy and achieve its social purpose, and there is appropriate reporting to the Board against these plans



Ask Yourself



- Do you truly exemplify diversity?
- Does everyone have a seat at the table?
- How are you planning to evidence you are meeting the diverse needs and the wider voices of your tenants for the regulator??



#HaveaSeatAtTheTable

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