

CHECK IT CHALLENGERS



CONGRATULATIONS ON 1 YEAR CHECK IT CHALLENGERS!

We recently celebrated one year since the Check it Challengers was launched. We invited the Check it Challengers to a celebration event at Gateway Plaza to have a look back over the last year and what's next for them.



THE IDEA

When we were going out into communities we found that the people we spoke to had an interest in being involved but they had other commitments such as work or young families or just didn't like the idea of formal meetings.

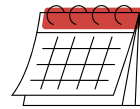
We came up with the idea of Check it Challengers which allowed tenants to have their views heard from the comfort of their own home, with a timeframe to suit them. This has given us the opportunity to widen the tenant voice, remove barriers to engagement, engage with underrepresented groups and offer a less formal way of engagement



THE LAUNCH

On the 6th August 2024 the Check it Challengers were given their first project, the brand new New Tenancy Pack.

This first project was sent out to just 16 Check it Challengers. Today we have a total of 35 Check it Challengers signed up! More than doubling the subscription in the first year!



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Lets take a quick snap shot view of what has happened in the last year of Check it Challengers:

- 20 Projects completed
- 308 survey responses
- 11 Berneslai Homes teams have used Check it Challengers to review something
- Approximately 30 improvements have been made as a result of Check it Challengers feedback (still awaiting feedback from recent projects)
- 7 members of Check it Challengers took part in this years Annual Report Editorial Group.



WHY I BECAME A CHECK IT CHALLENGER

Just after we launched the Check it Challengers, we asked members why they decided to sign up. Here is a few things they had to say:

"Able to help Berneslai Homes in its engagement with people and being able to do so when I have time and it is convenient to me."

"To help others gain better lives and happiness in their homes. I enjoy helping others"

"I became a Check it Challenger because I think it's a good thing to have people's feedback on the subjects"

"I became a Check It Challenger because at times information given by an organisation can, to some tenants be confusing and difficult to understand. I feel that by checking what information Berneslai Homes send out I can have an input into making the information concise and orderly and therefore easier to understand."

"I became a check it challenger to represent older people's view's on some of the communication they receive and help to understand how this affects them "

"I became a check it challenger because we get to view all the leaflets and get to know what's happening in various places and I feel it keeps me involved with what's going on"

All great reasons to become a Check it Challenger. Let us know the reason you signed up to be a Check it Challenger, just email us at communityengagement@berneslaihomes.co.uk



THE IMPACT OF THE CHECK IT CHALLENGERS

We can list all the ways the the Check it Challengers have made in a difference in the documents, surveys and website areas you have reviewed. Things that may seem small like grammar, punctuation, changing the order questions are asked in a survey or the use of colour, but they can all make a real difference to tenants, making sure they are easy to follow and understand, which is the very reason we started Check it Challengers.

However, what we didn't anticipate was the wider impact the group would have. This stretches far wider than the actual project you have reviewed. Here are a few examples:



ASB Week

Thanks to feedback in the survey on the social media campaign it was decided to give tenants the opportunity to give their feedback in person at stalls in Barnsley Market throughout the week and at an event on the Summer Lane estate. The comments from the project on the ASB Survey gave the team the idea to focus a full day of ASB Week on the impact ASB has on health and wellbeing and detail the support that is available.



Lettings letters - information inserts

Thanks to comments on this project the Lettings Team have been working on a more comprehensive telephone survey for those not online.



Adaptations Policy

You reviewed the policy but the team noticed a recurring theme in the comments about the human element of adaptations, how they improve the lives and independence of tenants. The team did add a paragraph into the policy to reflect this, but realised they wanted to do more and so have been looking into getting this message out more via other avenues such as the website



Damp, Mould and Condensation Booklet

The reviews of the booklet were great and you had so many ideas. The booklet is limited to space so instead the team decided to take some of the ideas and add them into the wider damp and mould campaign.

This shows that teams are looking into your comments on the surveys and reflecting on how we deliver services.



OFFICER COMMENTS

We asked teams who had used the Check it Challengers what they thought of the process. Here is what they had to say:

"The Check it Challengers have reviewed several of our surveys and provided invaluable feedback on the questions we plan to ask our tenants. This process has enabled us to design questions that are specifically tailored to our tenants', ensuring that the surveys are clear, easy to understand, and user-friendly."

Customer Insight Officer

"The Check it Challengers greatly supported us to provide a full week of interventions and activities with our tenants and resident during ASB Week. Their contribution to help us develop a ASB survey to gather information around the types of ASB tenants and residents were experiencing and collect information around service improvements was invaluable. Thank you for your support."

ASB Manager

"The Check it Challengers feedback was really useful. Hearing views from different tenants provided insight as to how the tone, information and wording of the letters was received. The questions were answered with the right level of detail, and as a result we amended the tone of the letter, added in more information about the support offer and were happy with the final draft. This will continue in future cover letters. I look forward to my review of rent arrears letters and using the Check it Challengers again. Great job. Thank you!"

Income Manager

"I would like to thank the Check it Challengers for assisting the Assessments Team with some information we wanted to send out to our customers. The Check It Challengers provided us with some really good feedback which enabled us to get a good understanding of what customers may or may not want from the information we were providing. This enabled us to update our letters and emails accordingly. The info we now send out has been well received."

Assessment Team Leader



WHAT'S NEXT?

As you can see the Check it Challengers have had an amazing first year! You have taken the expectations of what this group could be and more than exceeded them. So, what's next for the Check it Challengers? How do we go forward? We asked those that attended the celebration event for their thoughts and here is what they had to say:



WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED ABOUT BEING A CHECK IT CHALLENGER?

- Giving feedback
- The variety of projects
- Helping other residents
- Getting involved
- It gives an insight into Berneslai Homes
- Learning a lot
- It's interesting
- It gives me a purpose
- It makes me feel like I am part of a community
- It feels like I have a voice
- Being able to work from home
- The flexibility of the offer
- It gives enough time to complete projects
- How easy the process is
- It gives time for independent thoughts, without influence



IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT THE PROCESS THAT WE CAN IMPROVE?

- More open questions
- More feedback, more often
- Officer comments after each project - it was nice to hear their thoughts on the process
- Coming together more as a collective to receive stats/info of what we are achieving. BUT don't have meetings for meetings sake because then we move away from the positive ethos of this original engagement idea
- Improve response rates
- Explain jargon - in relevant documents
- Don't guide questions
- Give teams a deadline to give feedback
- Make us aware of the impact of the Check it Challengers more often
- Put feedback somewhere more visual
- Promote it more, explain the potential of the Check it Challengers and how much we need the lived experience.



HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT EXPANDING YOUR ROLE AS A CHECK IT CHALLENGER?

The group was mixed in their responses to this question, with some saying to leave it as it is "if it's not broke, don't fix it" but other members would welcome expanding their role, giving ideas like focus groups that are follow ups to projects, or mystery shopping.



HOW MANY CHECK IT CHALLENGERS SHOULD WE AIM TO RECRUIT IN THE NEXT YEAR?

Again, the response was varied on the question with suggestions of 15, 30 and another 35 (if we did it in one year, we can do it again!). There was also the suggestion that we should only have a maximum of 50 members to the Check it Challengers as too many can mean it can be counter productive.

There was also a valid point made in that it is not about the amount of people we have signed up, it is about the amount of responses we get, therefore there is a need to look at the number of inactive Check it Challengers and remove them from the list.

It was also suggested to look into areas of the borough where there are little/no representation and target these areas as part of a recruitment drive.

Ideas for recruitment included:

- Targeting tenants on sign up
- Run a recruitment campaign on social media
- Design a leaflet to put in libraries, shops and in the new tenant pack
- Run a 'refer a friend' scheme, offering incentives to ask current members to refer a friend



ACTIONS

After looking at all of the feedback from the session, the team have come up with the following actions:

- Design a feedback form to give to teams along with the results of the survey after each project and ask that they complete this within 10 working days so that this can be passed to Check it Challengers after each project. Continue to do a quarterly feedback summary to put on the website.
- Make sure any jargon in projects comes with a glossary.
- Contact any inactive Check it Challengers to see if there are any barriers causing the lack of engagement. Remove those from the list who no longer want to be involved. Continuously monitor responses, ensuring the group is only made up of active members.
- Look at areas in the borough with little/no representation and target these areas for a recruitment drive.
- Recruit Check it Challengers to take the number of membership to 50. Review the membership numbers after 3 months.
- Design a Check it Challengers leaflet to put up in shops, libraries, community buildings etc to advertise the offer.
- Ask Comms Team to run a social media campaign highlighting the potential of the Check it Challengers for the recruitment drive.
- Refresh the Check it Challengers webpage.
- Look for opportunities for focus groups based on projects.
- Expand the current Check it Challenger role to include mystery shopping.
- Use more open questions in surveys to get more insight.
- Organise an annual Check it Challengers in person meeting to reflect and exchange ideas.



"When we first thought of the idea, I set the team a target of recruiting 10 members in year one, well we've truly exceeded this having over 30!. That's more than 30 voices we haven't heard from before, each bringing a fresh new perspective and lots of valuable lived experience, helping us improve our services. Please accept a massive thank you from me, as your voices have made a massive difference for the tenants of Berneslai Homes. I'm looking forward to working with you all over the next year, let's see if we can reach 50 members and really blow the target out of the water!"

Kind Regards,

Chaire

Customer Engagement Manager