



ARCH PRESS RELEASE

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REPAIRS TOP TENANTS' CONCERNS

Repairs topped the list of concerns among people who live in council properties during an interactive poll at the ARCH Tenants' and Residents' Conference 2009.

The event at Birmingham City Football Club, which attracted around 120 delegates from stock retained authorities, included voting using hand-held sets.

When asked to name their priorities, 38% of tenants classed repairs and maintenance (speed and quality of service) as their biggest worry. The next biggest concern was crime and anti-social behaviour, which attracted 33% of votes. Community cohesion issues were the major concern for 15%. Rent levels were named by 10% as their biggest worry. Environmental issues were named as the key issue by 4%.

In a question about the impact of the recession on housing, 87% of tenants thought housing had become more important since the downturn.

A large majority of voters – 96% – thought councils should have more resources to directly build new homes as a way of providing employment and boosting the economy as well as providing more affordable housing.

The tenants present were not particularly optimistic about the outcome of the review of the Housing Revenue Account system, which is currently under way. When asked whether they thought it would provide a fairer and more transparent finance system, only 15% said 'yes'. The majority – 59% – said 'no' and 26% were unsure.

When asked about the importance of housing to employment, education, health, economy and environment, 66% thought its biggest impact was on health.

Opening the conference, which was organised by TPAS, Marlene Price, resident representative on the ARCH executive board, said: 'This is the third ARCH annual tenants' and residents' event and it has been an excellent year for ARCH. The partnership between residents, councillors and officers provides the very best model for high quality, accountable housing. ARCH will continue to lobby for us to get the same treatment as other social housing options.'

Pictured:

Interactive voting at the ARCH Tenants' and Residents' Conference 2009. The event at Birmingham City Football Club attracted around 120 delegates from stock retained authorities.

Marlene Price, resident representative on the ARCH executive board, opening the event.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- 1) The Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) was set up for councils whose tenants have chosen the local authority as their landlord. ARCH brings councils who own and manage housing together to get the best deal for their tenants.
- 2) ARCH's governance structure includes a Tenants' Sub-Group, which forms a regional network of people who have voted for their council to be their landlord. Tenants and residents have also been fully involved in establishing ARCH's priorities for reforming the housing finance system, which have fed into its submission to the HRA review.

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