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## TENANT INSPECTORS AND MYSTERY SHOPPING (TIMS) - TERMS OF REFERENCE

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### Purpose

These Terms of Reference (TOR) set out the role, rights and responsibilities of the Torus Tenant inspectors and Mystery Shoppers (TIMS). The TIMS were established to provide a specialist focus on landlord/tenant services Torus provide to ensure sector leading service is delivered to customers.

The purpose of the TIMS will be to provide independent opinion from a customer perspective as to how across the landlord/tenant service Torus provide are actually received by customers. They will carry out a range of reality checks / inspections across various service areas including Torus local offers with the purpose of identifying where service delivery and/or customer experience can be improved.

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### Role

The role of the TIMS will be:

- To carry out reality checks to identify how effective a local offer / service delivery is
- To assess whether service/service delivery could be improved and, if so, making suggestions on how and in what way they can be improved
- To consider what offers get best value for money considering both quality and costs for the wider customer base
- A range of assignments/activities may be used to test Torus' services, such as:
  - Assessment of a sample of empty homes (voids) to test the letting standard
  - Test telephone calls to customer services to report a repair / incident of anti-social behaviour
  - Test telephone calls to out of hours' service
  - Assessment of reception areas of Torus's offices / Hubs
- Undertake interviews and observations with members of Torus staff to identify where Torus exceeds expectations and where improvements can be made

Approved @ LOC 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023

- Use wider understanding of the issues affecting Torus to make sensible and realistic suggestions for improvements
  - To ensure familiarisation with the relevant information provided during an inspection or mystery shopping assignment / activity and to consider results against Torus' Policy and procedures
  - Provide accurate and detailed records of activities using specifically designed checklists and briefings
  - Identify and suggest recommendations for improvements identified by evidence gathered
  - Carry out activities within an agreed timescale
  - To have an overview of Torus quarterly performance and suggest any areas that may benefit from inspection
  - To report findings quarterly to the Landlord Operations Committee (LOC) and the Scrutiny Group as appropriate
  - Influencing future Scrutiny Panel reviews for a particular service area (when required)
  - Prepare outcomes of all inspection and mystery shopping assignments and produce Tenant Inspector Feedback reports highlighting strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement
  - Prepare outcomes of all inspection and mystery shopping assignments and present to all customers via "you said, we did" on the Toru website
  - Contribute to the Tenant Annual Report
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## Membership

All members need to carry out a training programme and tenants can choose how often they want to be involved.

The profile of the TIMS should, where possible, reflect the tenant base of Torus and represent the three main heartlands

Membership to TIMS is only open to those who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Current tenants of Torus; or
- Current customers of Torus, ie, are currently in receipt of, and pay for, regular or periodic ongoing services from Torus, eg, leaseholder, or share owners

Exclusions apply to the following groups: whom may not be eligible to apply:

- Members of staff within Torus; or
- Customers in material or serious breach of their tenancy or lease agreements
- Customers with a live complaint within the Torus complaints process may be suspended from TIMS until the complaint is fully resolved
- Anyone under 18

## Safeguards

Members must:

- Adopt and abide by the code of conduct; and
- Attend appropriate training
- Uphold Torus' high standards of conduct and probity by adhering to the code of conduct and respecting confidentiality of information; and
- Remain objective and not bring personal issues into their work with the Complaints Panel
- Members will be expected to act as individuals and not represent any interested group, area or political party
- New and continuing membership will be subject to an annual appraisal and personal development process, which will take account of attendance, contribution to reviews and how members work as part of a team
- Any member who is in breach of their tenancy conditions or becomes involved in any activity which brings the name of the Repairs and Maintenance Panel and/or Torus into disrepute will be suspended, pending investigation, and may be asked to resign
- If a group member wishes to resign, they should inform the Tenant Voice team in writing or by e-mail
- All customers who wish to participate as a Mystery Shopper have the potential to be exposed to information about Torus' services which could be of a sensitive or confidential nature. Therefore, all members must sign the code of conduct and confidentiality agreement. Any Group member who breaches the code of conduct will be asked to leave TIMS.
- TIMS shall conduct an annual review of its work and effectiveness, with the support of a Tenant Voice team member. This annual review will include a review of the terms of reference.

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Other considerations:

Risk assessments are in place for TIMS to minimise risks to their health and safety when carrying out inspections. The risk assessments are issued to all new Inspectors and Mystery Shoppers when recruited. They are also reviewed on an annual basis and are redistributed to all members should changes be made.

Torus will provide reasonable travel expenses and electronic equipment in order for members to fully participate in assignments / activities.