

Working in partnership with Lewes District Council tenants and leaseholders

Our Compact Signatories



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Marshall'.

Jayne Marshall (Chair of TOLD)

On behalf of Tenants of Lewes District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Saunders'.

Steve Saunders, Lead Councillor for Housing

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Keeping'.

Mike Keeping, Head of Housing

On behalf of Lewes District Council

“Working together to achieve excellence in our housing service.”



Signed on the 9th September 2009



DeMontfort Fun day

Lewes District Tenants' Compact *Achieving excellence in our Housing Services*

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Fun in the community

Lewes District Tenants' Compact *Achieving excellence in our Housing Services*

I GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
AHO	Area Housing Officer – Responsible for day to day tenancy issues such as new tenants, dealing with Anti Social Behaviour, transfers, and estate inspections.
Benchmarking	Looking at Lewes District Council and other landlords to compare services such as repairs, tenant involvement and rent levels, and we then publish this information.
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic groups.
Business Plan	30 year plan setting out the Housing Department's priorities and projected spending on it's housing.
Cabinet	Main decision making body of the Council made up of elected District Councillors.
CBL	Choice Based Lettings (CBL) is the lettings scheme (Homemove) for council and housing association homes in the Lewes District and surrounding areas including Adur, Arun, Brighton & Hove, Chichester, Hastings, Rother and Wealden. It is designed to give you more choice about where you want to live. You can use Homemove if you are an existing tenant seeking a transfer within the Lewes District Council or surrounding area or a home seeker applying for the first time. The scheme covers all the available council and housing association homes, including sheltered housing. To see the available properties and for details of how to apply please go to www.homemove.org.uk
Compact	An agreement between a council and its tenants. Compacts can be district wide, neighbourhood based or issue based such as the Sheltered Housing Compact.
Cost Benefit Analysis	Measurement of whether ways of getting people involved are effective and value for money. Lewes District Council seeks to measure which methods gain the most benefit for the least cost.
DAP	The Housing Services Departmental Action Plan (DAP) is structured around the key priorities of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and outlines the actions we will take to meet these priorities. The Departmental Action Plan is agreed by SMT and is reviewed and updated every year. Tenants and leaseholders are fully consulted in the development of the plan and are involved in the ongoing monitoring and review process.
Decent Homes Standard	A Central Government standard for modern homes which the Council's properties are required to meet.
Environmental Budget	A budget that is prioritised by tenants to make improvements to the environment of estates across the District.
ESCC	East Sussex County Council.
Homemove	The name of the East Sussex Choice Based Letting scheme.
Housemark	Benchmarking and information sharing organisation promoting best practice for housing providers.

Housing Consultative Panel	Panel made up of housing staff, tenants' reps and councillors. The main objective is to oversee estate improvement budget and environmental budget.
Housing Revenue Account subsidy	Transfer of funding to or from the Council based on the Government's estimate of the Council's need and rental income.
Impact Assessments	Ways to measure whether your involvement has made a difference and whether it is value for money.
LAST	Lewes Association of Scattered Tenants, who represent tenants that live in properties that do not have an established Tenants Residents' Association.
LDC	Lewes District Council.
Mystery Shopping	Lewes District Council Service Standards are tested by trained tenants using a real or contrived scenario.
Neighbourhood Action Plans	Plans setting out a tenants' and residents' associations' proposed goals and the steps they need to take to achieve them.
PID	Project implementation document detailing how specific projects will be carried out and by whom.
SETUP	South East Training Uniting People – housing organisations who join together to offer tenant training.
Sheltered Forum	A representative group of scheme representatives speaking for sheltered tenants in the Lewes District.
Sheltered Housing	Properties that are available for rent for over 60s only, with the services of a scheme manager.
SMT	Senior Management Team: Comprises the Head of Housing Services, Office Manager, Tenant Participation Manager, Housing Maintenance Manager, Housing Projects Manager and Housing Operations Manager.
TMO	Tenant Management Organisation – a housing organisation in which tenants have taken over the running of some or all of the services on their estate.
TOLD	Tenants of Lewes District – umbrella group made up of TRA representatives from all groups in the district.
TPAS	Tenant Participation Advisory Service – Independent consultancy service on Tenant Participation.
TRA's	Tenants' and Resident's Associations in local villages or estates.
TRIP	Tenants' and Residents' Involvement Pool – a database held by the Tenant Participation Team detailing all tenants who want to be involved in housing decision making.
TSA	Tenant Services Authority – new social housing services.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

We (**the Council**) have been consulting with you, our tenants and leaseholders (**tenants**) on the management of your homes for a number of years. A formal document known as the 'Tenant Partnership Agreement' which outlined the process for consultation and tenants priorities for service improvements, was introduced in August 2000 and updated in 2002. In 2006 a new document was produced and the name changed to the "Lewes District Council Tenants' Compact".

Over the years the partnership between the Council and tenants has given you the opportunity to take part in the decisions that affect your lives and communities. This has enabled the Council to develop and continue to improve the services it provides.

This partnership, working together with other parties, has developed seven key priorities for the delivery of the housing service:

1. to maximise the Council housing stock available to let
2. to maintain and improve the condition of the housing stock
3. to foster tenant empowerment and partnership with all stakeholders
4. to provide good quality housing services that meet the needs of tenants and takes account of diversity
5. to promote sustainable communities, particularly within Council stock
6. to ensure good and continually improving environmental performance in our housing stock and related activities
7. to collect efficiently all charges related to the Housing Service

The fourth priority underpins the Council's continuing commitment to work together with tenants and residents.

There are currently 16 Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRA's) in the Lewes District. The TRA's join together under the umbrella of the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD).

The Senior Management Team (SMT) from Housing Services consults formally with TOLD every month to make sure that the views of tenants are included in all aspects of housing management.

Two documents provide the framework for the delivery of the Tenant Participation Service in Lewes District.

2.1.1 The Tenants Compact which:

- details in an agreement how tenants and the Council will work in partnership to improve Housing Services
- lists how tenants can get involved in the management of the housing service
- explains what resources are available to promote tenant involvement
- lists tenant priorities and sets out in a Compact Action Plan, proposed actions for improvement. (See appendix I)
- explains how the improvements and service delivery will be monitored.

The Tenant Participation Compact Action Plan is monitored monthly by TOLD and is updated annually.

2.1.2 The Council's Housing Community Development Plan which:

- sets out each TRA's priorities for the next two years and records their achievements over the last two years.
- sets out whether each TRA has a Neighbourhood Action Plan in place and if regular Estate Walkabouts are held.

The Housing Community Development Plan is produced every two years and is due to be rewritten during 2009.

2.2 Developing the Compact

The Compact is reviewed and updated every year. This edition has been drawn up following consultation with a range of partners, who have a key role in developing excellent services for council tenants including:

- a working group with tenant representatives, Councillors and council staff
- a consultant from the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service who assisted the development of the Compact by gathering the views of Council staff, tenants and councillors and carried out a desktop review of our 2006 Compact to identify strengths and weaknesses. The recommendations which were identified, have been addressed, and included as part of this Compact.

We held a competition to get pictures for the compact, which ran in the Council's newsletter to all tenants, *Housing Link*. The winning photo is shown on page 17.

Comments and suggestions were also invited from:

- TOLD
- Tenants Reading Group
- Council staff
- Councillors

The Council greatly appreciates and values the contribution of the many individual tenants who have volunteered their time and energy to the production of the Compact and who continue to work together to support tenant participation.

For more details of how the Compact was developed, including a Project Implementation Document and Workplan, contact the Tenant Participation team on (01273) 487249/483185 or email tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk Please include a subject heading in your email.

2.3 Compact Statement, Aims and Commitment

Statement

This Compact agreement demonstrates the commitment of the Council and its tenants to work in partnership towards improving their homes, neighbourhoods and the Housing Service.

Aims

- to improve the service by listening to tenants and taking on board their needs
- to integrate the Tenant Compact into all aspects of service delivery
- to maintain a tenant participation framework, enabling tenants to join in as much or as little as they want in all aspects of the running and planning of Housing Services
- to abide by the Council's equalities statement, which is:

"We are responsible for providing efficient and effective services that are valued by all sections of the community. We must recognise and understand the needs of different groups and ensure that everyone has equal access to our services, information and employment opportunities. We aim to provide services fairly to all and seek to identify those whose needs are less well met by us and how we can address those needs.

Discrimination can occur in society against, for example, people from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, women, disabled people and on the basis of age, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, family status and social class. We are committed to eliminating discrimination and ensuring that people are not excluded from community life or disadvantaged for any reason.

We are committed to meeting our statutory equality responsibilities and will aim to place equality issues at the centre of our service planning and decision-making processes. We will work to ensure that all of our working practices promote access, equality and good relations between different groups and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

We have implemented Equality Schemes for race, disability and gender. These Schemes fulfil the Council's specific duties under equalities legislation whilst complementing the other objectives in our Comprehensive Equality Policy. We are also working to improve our equality practices within the Equality Framework for Local Government which is a standard for levels of achievement in delivering equality in employment and service provision.

To demonstrate our commitment, both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have responsibility for leading the Council's equality agenda."

Commitment

The Council and TOLD welcome the opportunities offered by this Tenant Compact.

In order to achieve our Compact aims the Council will:

- work with you to continually review, monitor and improve existing arrangements for tenant participation
- enable you to participate as much or as little as you want in all aspects of the running and planning of housing services
- provide a structure so that Local Partnership Compacts (sometimes known as Neighbourhood Action Plans) for specific areas, estates or special interest groups, can be introduced, as and when required
- ask for your views and consider any representations made before implementing any substantial changes in housing management
- reach arrangements with other agencies on how they can be involved in tenant participation
- continue to ensure that resources, information and training are available and accessible to tenants, staff and councillors to enable them to take part effectively.

TOLD will:

- work with the Council to continually review, monitor and improve existing arrangements for tenant participation
- participate in regular monitoring of this Compact and other key departmental documents
- encourage other tenants to become involved in tenant participation
- consult with TRA's on significant changes to housing policy.





Photography Competition Winner taken by Hadley Welch age 15

3 WHY GET INVOLVED?

In this section we will look at the benefits of getting involved. We will also update you on the progress made on the actions listed in the Compact Action Plan 2006 as well as detailing other achievements that have been made as a direct result of tenant participation in Lewes District .

3.1 The benefits of getting involved

The Council has worked with tenants to develop lots of opportunities for involvement, arranged around your needs. You can take part in as much or as little as you want.

Here are some of the benefits of getting involved:

- You know your neighbourhood best. Involvement gives you the chance to influence or make decisions that affect your homes and neighbourhoods. Getting involved in estate inspections is a great way to tell us about local issues.
- You will learn more about how the Council works. At local TRA meetings you will find out more about who does what, and help influence changes to housing services, whilst developing good working relations with staff. You will also have the chance to raise local issues with staff and be a part of the solution.
- You will meet a range of people with a wide range of experience. You will be able to share ideas and work together to improve things for you, your neighbours and the wider community.
- Your time is valuable and by giving up your free time you should not be out of pocket, therefore all reasonable care and travel costs to and from involvement activities are paid for by the Council and agreed 'out of pocket' costs are met. For more details on this please see section 5.1.



3.2 Compact achievements 2006-2009

In our last Compact we produced an Action Plan for 2006-2009, setting out a number of key actions to be investigated by the Council working with tenants. We are proud that all of the Actions requested in the plan were dealt with and that tenants were fully involved in the process.

The table below details the actions, what the Council did as a result and who was involved:

Ref	Tenants' asked for	The Council did	Who was involved
Priority - To maximise the Council housing stock available to let			
Departmental Action Plan (DAP) DAP 1.3	Provide tenants with transfer/exchange details on our web site	The introduction of Choice Based Lettings, has delayed this. In the near future transfer/exchange details will be included on the "Home Move" website at www.homemove.org.uk	TOLD SMT
Priority - To maintain and improve the condition of the housing stock			
DAP 2.13	To investigate feasibility of regular property inspections	A form has been produced which Maintenance Officers are using when they do any visits and they are also visiting homes that have not had a repair done for a number of years to ensure that the property is safe and secure	Anti Social Behaviour Working Group, Maintenance Officers & SMT
Priority - To foster tenant empowerment and partnership with all stakeholders			
DAP 3.3	Increase tenant consultation on major improvement works and works to communal areas	All tenants are now sent a feedback form, following major improvement works. The Council looked into whether they could increase tenant consultation on communal repairs, but TOLD felt the cost to do this outweighed the benefits	Major Improvements Working Group TOLD
DAP 3.5	Measure tenant satisfaction with all parts of the repairs service by introducing a system of performance monitoring to make effective use of feedback	All "poor" reports and what was done to resolve the situation are brought to TOLD annually	Repairs Working Group TOLD SMT

Ref	Tenants' asked for	The Council did	Who was involved
TP Action Plan	Assess tenant and leaseholder training needs	Assess tenant and leaseholder training needs Each TRA is sent a list of training available and asked to select what they feel is appropriate, which is then provided through SETUP. See section 5.3	TOLD in partnership with SETUP. Consultation with TRA's
Priority - To provide good quality housing services that meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders and take account of diversity			
DAP 4.12	Publish comprehensive information on how we perform against our published standards	Published information in Housing Link and on website	TOLD. Info to all tenants.
DAP 4.13	Produce a range of clearly branded Housing Services leaflets covering all aspects of our service	All the Housing Services leaflets have been redesigned and updated	Customer Care Working Group TOLD SMT
DAP 4.14	Produce an information/compact handbook for leaseholders	Completed and a copy has been sent to all Leaseholders Copies of the leaseholder handbook are available at www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/housing_leaseholders_handbook.pdf or by contacting the Garages and Leaseholder Officer on (01273) 484290	Leaseholders Working Group TOLD SMT Housing Link
DAP 4.25	Carry out analysis of maintenance and repairs results with other housing providers	The Council uses Housemark to compare our maintenance and repairs service with other social housing providers. Reports in Housing Link	All tenants via Housing Link
DAP 4.28	Develop an Elder Person Strategy with East Sussex County Council	Still ongoing	Staff Working Group Sheltered Forum

Ref	Tenants' asked for	The Council did	Who was involved
Priority - To promote sustainable communities, particularly within Council stock			
DAP 5.2	Revise Tenancy Agreement	Tenancy Agreement revised and new copy sent to all tenants	TOLD TRA's
DAP 5.4	Introduce a common monitoring system to contribute more effectively to the Council's work on reducing Crime and Disorder	Details on antisocial behaviour and how dealt with reported back to TOLD. Key housing staff involved in Joint Action Groups with other agencies and reported back via Housing Link. Tenants at the last Council Housing Conference voted to sign up to the Respect agenda	TOLD Tenants Conference Staff
DAP 5.6	Review the departments Anti-social Behaviour Policy	Revised the Policy	Tenants Conference TOLD ASB Working Group Housing Link
Priority - To collect efficiently all charges related to the housing service			
DAP 7.1	To increase the range of rent payment options by investigating on-line methods of payment accounts	We have introduced an online payment method via www.lewes.gov.uk . There is also the option to use the Post Office/PayPoint Card, which can be used at the Post Office or any shop that displays the PayPoint symbol	Rents Working Group Survey to all tenants Feedback from TRA's Housing Link
DAP 7.2	Review procedure for the collection of rent and arrears	All relevant letters have been rewritten and it was agreed after consultation to ask all new tenants to either pay two weeks rent in advance or show that they have submitted a Housing Benefit Claim form. Garage rent procedures have also been updated	Rents Working Group TRA's SMT Housing Link

3.3 Other achievements – going the extra mile

In addition to the Compact Action Plan achievements a number of other improvements to our service have been made through consultation and co-operation between tenants and the Council that include:

Tenants' asked for	Why was this done	The Council did	Who was involved
Lowest possible annual rent increase agreed for 2009 with maximum spend on improvements	TOLD requested tenant input into the rent set by the Council	Reduced rent increase to less than Government recommended increase. Agreed to use some money from the Council's working balance for maintenance and repairs	TOLD Working Group Tenants trained by SETUP Consultation with TRA's Info to all tenants via Housing Link SMT
Review and improve the Internal Redecoration Scheme	Major Improvements Working Group and Sheltered Forum, asked for a review of this policy to make fairer especially for all older tenants	Changed policy so that all tenants over 65 can apply to have room decorated every two years, not just those on benefits, plus other minor changes	TOLD Open Meeting Consultation with TRA's/sheltered forum Info via Housing Link SMT
Introduce a Responsible Dog Owners Agreement	TOLD and Area Housing Officers identified problem	Introduced a form that all dog owners to sign. Changed tenancy agreement to reflect this	TOLD TRA's Housing Link SMT
Produce a comprehensive range of leaflets and fact sheets to form a new Tenants Handbook	TOLD and Customer Care Working Group identified that our leaflets were all different and not comprehensive	All new tenants now receive range of leaflets as part of their Tenants Handbook	TOLD Housing Link SMT
Introduce Choice Based Lettings Policy for allocating properties	Government policy	New system in place to promote more choice. Six month review to see how effective taking place summer 2009	TOLD Working Group Consultation with all TRA's Housing Link Home Move Website SMT

3.4 Achievements of our Tenants and Residents Associations

Our sixteen TRA's across Lewes District have made huge differences to the community in which they live, by working together with the Council and other agencies such as the Police, Youth Development Service, local town and parish councils etc, to provide and improve services for their whole neighbourhood.

Here are just a few examples of some TRA achievements:

In **Lewes**, the Landport Residents Association has worked with the Community Services section of the Council to obtain lottery funding for a new skate area and youth shelter. They run a successful community room which holds bingo sessions, coffee mornings and "Stop Smoking" sessions in partnership with the NHS.

The DeMontfort Improvement Group in partnership with the YMCA and Youth Development Association has raised funds to run youth clubs, after school clubs and summer activities from a community flat, provided in partnership with Lewes District Council.

In **Peacehaven**, the Balcombe Road Residents Association held a number of coffee mornings and with the money raised part funded the installation of knee high fencing to provide a visual barrier to help combat anti-social behaviour.

The Ashington Community Association in partnership with the NCDA has restarted the Youth Club in their area.

In **Wivelsfield**, the Wivelsfield Parish Tenants and Residents Association, in partnership with the Parish Council and Action in Rural Sussex are running a successful youth room, and work with the Parish Council to hold an annual Christmas tea for all the older people in the Village. They have also undertaken training in partnership with ESCC to enable them to help run the speed detector scheme.

In **Seaford**, the Cradle Hill Community Association worked with Seaford Town Council and other funders to replace their dilapidated portacabin with a new larger one. The cabin is used for a pre school playgroup, after school activities and community events for older people.

Beame Court Residents Association have identified many improvements needed to their communal areas by holding walkabouts with their Area Housing Officer.

In **Newhaven**, the Hanson Road Residents Association has raised funds to hold a community clean up. They provided a skip and local people were invited to dump their bulk rubbish. This has helped to keep local areas and gardens clean and tidy. They have also worked with the Police and Youth Service to help combat ASB.

In **Ditchling**, Beacon Park Residents Association has promoted improvements to the bus service and also made successful bids to the Environmental Budget for improvements such as lighting.

All the TRA's are consulted regularly for their views on housing issues. TOLD sends regular newsletters asking TRA's to discuss topical issues and report back. For example, the Responsible Dog Owners Agreement, changes to rent collection and changes to the internal redecoration scheme were all discussed with TRA's before being introduced.





5-a-side football winners (TOLD Competition at Plumpton)

4 HOW TO GET INVOLVED

4.1 Housing services you can help to improve

Listed below are the different housing services provided by the Council that you can help to improve by getting involved. There is also a short summary of the different ways to get involved. Section 4.2 gives full details on the different ways to get involved, how much of your time may be taken up in order for you to take part and whom to contact.

Service:	How you can get involved:
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion at TOLD meetings • individual enquiries with the Area Housing Officer • go to local TRA meeting • information sharing – Housing Link/Tenants Voice /Council Website
Major Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contractor selection • discussion at Tenants Conference • discussion at TOLD meetings • feedback from TOLD to TRA's • information sharing - Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council Website • individual jobs - involvement in planning the job and filling in feed back forms on completion • working group
Repairs and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contractor selection • survey – repairs feedback forms for each job • discussion at TOLD meetings • reporting issues at TRA meetings • working group • information sharing – Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council website
Empty properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • survey - New tenants feedback form • information sharing Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council Website • discussion at TOLD meetings • minimum standard for empty properties set by working group
Allocations and lettings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working group – reviewing Choice based lettings and allocations policy • information sharing - Move Ahead newsletter to all on waiting list 4 times a year • survey - New tenants feedback form • prospective tenants can access homes available on “Home Move” website

Service:	How you can get involved:
Rent collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion at TOLD meetings • information sharing- Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council website • attending rents surgeries
Tenancy conditions and agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion at TOLD meetings • pack of information sent with tenancy agreements • information sharing – any changes detailed in Housing Link
Housing benefit advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending rents surgeries • information sharing – Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council website
Leaseholder issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leaseholder handbook- designed by Leaseholder Working Group • designated Leaseholder Officer • information in Tenants Voice/Housing Link/ Council Website
Budgets, Finance and Rent setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOLD involvement in setting and monitoring of Business Plan • working group involved in annual rent consultation • discussion at TOLD meetings • information sharing – Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council Website
Sheltered Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheltered Compact • Sheltered Forum • 6 monthly scheme meetings • information sharing – Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Council Website
Housing Management and Neighbourhood issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walkabouts • attending local surgeries • use of Tenant Resource Centres and Community Rooms • local surveys by TRA's • local surveys from Area Housing Officers or Maintenance Officers • grounds maintenance working group review • TRA's working to provide youth projects/after school clubs, parents and toddlers etc. • information in Housing Link/Tenants Voice/Website
Tenant Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenant and residents involvement pool database • involvement via TOLD • information sharing via Housing Link/Tenants Voice/ Council Website

Service:	How you can get involved:
Customer Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mystery shopping • submitting complaints and compliments
Equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mystery shopping
Performance Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOLD monitor Housing Service Standards for Housing, see Appendix 2
Environmental works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Consultative Panel • ad hoc surveys to affected tenants from MO's and AHO's
Providing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenants newsletter "Tenants Voice" • TOLD involvement in production and monitoring of housing leaflets



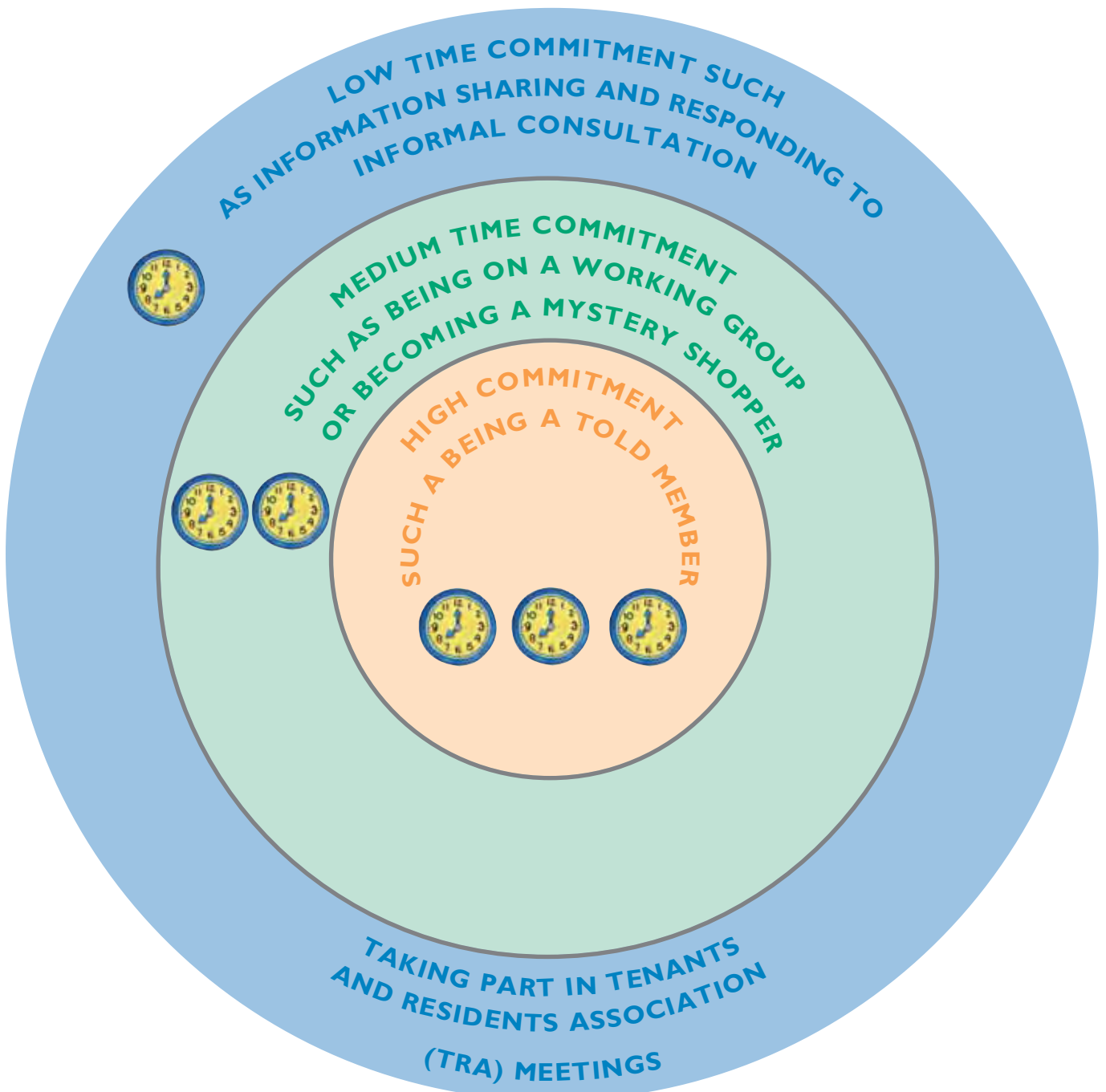
4.2 How you can get involved

There are a variety of ways to get involved – you choose.

We appreciate that your time is valuable, so for each involvement opportunity we have given an indication of the time commitment that you will need to make.

- low time commitment is less than 2 hours per month and irregular
- medium time commitment is more than two hours a month, both regular and irregular
- high time commitment is for 4 or more hours per month regularly

We have also detailed who can get involved, for example only tenants living in sheltered accommodation can take part in our Sheltered Forum. We also list some of the safeguards and structures that are in place for each involvement opportunity. Details of the resources that the Council makes available for tenant involvement are detailed in Section 5.



4.3 Low time commitment

The following ways to get involved have a low time commitment (less than two hours a month and irregular).



LOW TIME COMMITMENT

Information Sharing

You can get involved quickly and easily by reading information from the Council and from TRA's including:

- newsletters – 3 times a year the Housing Link newsletter is sent out by the Housing Department to all tenants in Lewes District. Included with this is the tenants' own newsletter – Tenants Voice, which is compiled by members of TOLD, with input welcomed from any tenant via the editor
- website – www.lewes.gov.uk contains information about the Housing Department
- TRA newsletters – TRA's often produce their own newsletter for their own local area
- leaflets and fact sheets – A full range of information leaflets and facts sheets are available from Housing Reception areas at either Fort Road, Newhaven or Fisher Street, Lewes or by calling (01273) 471600
- leaseholder handbook available from Garages and Leaseholder Officer, Housing Services, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes BN7 2LX, or by emailing housing@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email) or phoning (01273) 484290

Who can be involved? *Anyone*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- you can contribute articles to the Tenants Voice newsletter or make comments on any Housing Link articles by contacting the editors via the Tenant Participation Team, at 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes BN7 2TA or by emailing tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email)
- all information provided by the Council will be clear, up to date and accurate and can be available in a range of formats and languages on request

Ethnic Minorities taking part

Lewes District Council works with Sompriti, a partner agency based in Lewes to help consult with tenants on issues of particular relevance to ethnic minorities, for example dealing with racist incidents. The Council recognises that it needs to do more to engage with tenants from ethnic minorities and other groups such as disabled tenants. We will be looking to include more individuals from these groups who have completed a TRIP form to ensure that they are regularly consulted on housing issues, see the Compact Action Plan Appendix I for more details.



Attend Local Housing Officer/Maintenance Officer/ Rents Officer Surgeries

In some areas regular “drop in” surgeries are held to enable tenants to meet and discuss local issues with the above officers. To find out if a local surgery is held in your area, please contact the officer responsible for your area, see Appendix 6. If surgeries are not held, you can arrange a visit with the officer or come into one of our offices at either Fort Road, Newhaven or Fisher Street, Lewes for a confidential interview

Who can be involved? *Anyone living in the area where the surgery is set up*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- all surgeries are held at regular times, which are advertised locally, either in local newsletters or on noticeboards
- if surgeries are not regularly attended the Council may withdraw the service

Responding to surveys

Surveys may have a number of different formats:

- A Housing Services Status Survey is sent out to all tenants every 2 years to seek tenants’ views on the way the Housing Department is performing and their views for future priorities
- job satisfaction surveys are sent out with each repair
- anti-social behaviour questionnaires are sent out following the closure of a case
- local TRA’s send out surveys on a regular basis, seeking tenants’ opinions on neighbourhood issues
- surveys are sent to all new tenants seeking opinions on the process of moving and the standard of their new home
- adhoc surveys/consultation from Maintenance Officers or Housing Officers on proposed improvements to local areas such as lighting/parking improvement schemes or proposed major works in tenants’ homes such as a new kitchen
- Tenant and Resident Involvement Pool survey - in order to compile a database of tenants who want to be involved, this survey has been sent to all tenants and is included in sign up packs. It details all the ways to be involved, what tenants can be involved in and records personal data such as age, religion and ethnic background. See Appendix 7.

Who can be involved? *Anyone*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- the Council will investigate any “poor” reports that have been made on the job satisfaction surveys, sent out with each repair
- all Tenant and Resident Panel (TRIP) survey information held by the Council is kept on a secure database and will only be shared with relevant staff in order to improve services
- TOLD may discuss general survey results, but personal information will not be made available



Becoming a member of Lewes Association of Scattered Tenants (LAST)

If you do not have a Tenants or Residents' Association in your area, you can become a member of an association called LAST.

Who can be involved? *Anyone that does not have a local TRA*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- LAST is a constituted group, which meets four times a year.
- the constitution includes details of membership; aims of LAST; how meetings are conducted; how information is shared; how officers are invited; finances; equalities and how the group may be dissolved
- minutes of each meeting are sent to committee members. A newsletter is sent to all LAST members before an annual general meeting. LAST meetings are advertised in the Tenants Voice newsletter
- agenda items for LAST meetings can be sent two weeks in advance of meetings to the LAST Chair via 2a Horsfield Road Lewes, BN7 2TA or via email to Chair of LAST at the following address: tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email)

Sheltered Forum

This is attended by representatives elected from each sheltered scheme, of which there are 13 in the district. The Forum meets with the Council's Supported Housing team 4 times a year and discusses issues of relevance to the whole of sheltered housing. A Sheltered Compact is also in place, which is produced and overseen by the Sheltered Forum.

Who can be involved? *2 representatives elected from each sheltered scheme*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- the Sheltered Forum is a Constituted Group which meet 4 times a year
- the constitution includes detail of membership; how meetings are conducted; how information is shared; how officers are invited; finances; equalities and how the group may be dissolved
- minutes of each meeting are sent to committee members
- forum reps can submit agenda items up to a week before each meeting to Supported Housing at 20 Fort Road, Newhaven or by calling the Supported Housing Assistant on (01273) 484281
- the Sheltered Forum oversees a Sheltered Housing Compact, which is revised every 2 years.



Sheltered Scheme Meetings

Tenants living in sheltered schemes are invited to take part in twice yearly meetings with their own management team, to discuss issues of concern at their schemes.

Who can be involved? *Tenants living in sheltered schemes*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- minutes of each meeting are put in the 'blue book' in each sheltered scheme
- any tenant can ask for an agenda item to be included by contacting the Scheme Manager or the Supported Housing team at 20 Fort Road, Newhaven or by calling the Supported Housing Assistant on (01273) 484281, up to a week before each meeting

Take part in a Tenants Housing Conference

Every 18 months all tenants are invited to attend a tenants' conference, hosted by TOLD and key housing staff. You can take part in workshops and are consulted for your views on topical housing issues. There is also an opportunity to meet other tenants and staff and to share ideas and information over lunch.

Who can be involved? *Anyone*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- the conferences are planned by a sub group of TOLD and invited housing staff
- food, transport, carers costs etc. are all covered
- an open invitation is included in the Housing Link newsletter, and anyone who has attended a previous conference is sent a personal invite.

Focus Groups

Focus groups can be set up if a minor review of a housing service is to take place, see Appendix 3 and 5. Focus groups are set up to discuss and offer their opinion on a particular housing issue and usually only meet once or twice. You can be selected to take part if you have filled in a TRIP form, meaning your details will be on our database of involved tenants.

Who can be involved? *Pre-selected Tenants and Leaseholders*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- to ensure that a representative cross-section of participants are selected from our TRIP database, which also includes details on age, gender and ethnicity



Postal, email, phone consultation

You can sign up to be consulted on topical housing issues via the Housing Department or TOLD by the above methods. Typically tenants would expect to be contacted no more than 3 times a year for their views. To sign up to be consulted in either of these ways and on the housing topics of their choice tenants need to complete a Tenants and Residents Involvement Pool (TRIP) Form, a copy of which can be found in Appendix 7, or by calling the Tenant Participation team on (01273) 487249/483185 or emailing tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Who can be involved? *Anyone*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- all TRIP information is held on a secure database within the Tenant Participation Team (TP)
- TOLD/SMT decide on housing issues to be consulted on and the appropriate way to carry out consultation with tenants. If they agree to use any of the above methods, the TP team will conduct the consultation.

Estate Walkabouts/Inspections

These are inspections with tenants, Area Housing Officers, Area Maintenance Officers and sometimes police and local councillors. They focus on the appearance of the estate, the condition and atmosphere of neighbourhoods and highlight any estate improvements needed.

Who can be involved? *Anyone living in or representing the area*

Safeguard and structures in place:

- estate walkabouts/inspections take place on estates/communal areas every twelve weeks
- all abandoned and illegally parked cars on LDC land are removed within 8 weeks
- we plan to review the way estate inspections are carried out, see Compact Action Plan, Appendix 1.

Contact your Area Housing Officer for more details – see Appendix 6.



Younger people – taking part

Each TRA can have 2 young people co-opted on their group and some associations also have a specific young people's group. If consultation is being sought on a specific youth issue, surveys and meetings for those young people only will be held.

Who can be involved? *Any young person in the area covered by the TRA*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- all Council staff involved with young people have Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks carried out. The Council also pay for CRB checks for tenant volunteers who work with young people at the request of their TRA
- the Council recognises that it needs to do more to engage with tenants from ethnic minorities and other groups such as younger tenants. We will be working to target individuals from those groups who have completed a TRIP form to ensure that they are regularly consulted on housing issues. See Appendix I of the Compact Action Plan for more details.

Mystery Shopping

Mystery Shopping was introduced in January 2009. Tenants undertake training as Mystery Shoppers to test the Council's front line housing service and feed back on the performance. The Council uses the feedback to improve customer care across the department. We aim to expand our bank of mystery shoppers to enable more tenants to take part.

Who can be involved? *Anyone*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- All mystery shoppers attend a training session to ensure confidentiality, and that health and safety issues are dealt with
- Mystery Shopping will form part of the Compact action plan (see Appendix I for more details)

Contractor Selection

TOLD invites tenants to participate in the selection of Housing service contractors to ensure that the company selected provide the best value for money and the highest quality service. The tenants, selected by TOLD, are involved in setting questions and attending contractor interviews.

Who can be involved? *Any tenant selected by TOLD*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- training is provided for tenants to ensure that interviews comply with equalities standards
- if the lowest price contractor is not selected, then a report is written to

4.4 Medium time commitment

The following ways to get involved are medium time commitment (more than two hours in any month – both regular and irregular).

Taking part in Tenants' and Residents' Association (TRA) meetings

There are currently 16 TRA's across the Lewes District Council area. Most TRA's serve a geographical area and meet between 4 and 12 times a year. As well as dealing with housing matters via information received from TOLD, TRA's look at local issues such as improving road safety, tackling anti-social behaviour and running community activities. The TRA's will consult with the local community via surveys and work with other agencies in order to achieve their goals. TRA's are encouraged to develop Neighbourhood Action Plans to help them set achievable outcomes and to prioritise their activities.

Who can be involved? *Anyone within the area covered by the TRA*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- a constitution for each TRA will be in place. The constitution will include details of membership; aims of the TRA; how meetings are conducted; how information is shared; finances; equalities and how the group may be dissolved
- if the TRA requires Housing Staff or members to attend a meeting, they need to be formally invited unless an open invitation to all meetings has been agreed. Staff will attend if invited, or try and find a replacement, or send a written update
- to get an agenda item onto a TRA meeting, you will need to contact the secretary of the TRA
- To get a full list of existing TRA's contact the Tenant Participation Team on (01273) 487249/483185 or via tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).



MEDIUM TIME COMMITMENT



Working Groups

Working groups are set up when TOLD identifies an aspect of the housing service that needs a Major Review (See Appendices 3 and 4). Working groups meet regularly, often monthly, and consist of tenants, housing staff, councillors and other stakeholders. The working group makes recommendations for changes, which if agreed with staff and other tenants are either implemented immediately, fed into the Housing Departmental Action Plan (DAP), or taken to the Council Cabinet for approval. Each review can take around a year to complete. There are currently working groups looking at:

- selecting a contractor for a new ten year grounds maintenance contract
- a “Move On” review, looking at how we make best use of our available housing
- a review of our new Choice Based Lettings policy
- Improving services for disabled tenants.

Who can be involved? *Anyone*

Safeguards and structures in place:

- working groups are not constituted, but have guidelines in place see appendix 3 and 4
- each working group agrees a scope and time plan when first set up
- members receive a thank you voucher on completion of the working group
- contact the Tenant Participation Team on 01273 487249 or email at: tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk
(please remember to include a subject heading in your email).





Housing Consultative Panel – prioritising a budget for communal area improvements

This panel is made up of key housing staff, tenants' reps (2 from each TRA) and Councillors.

The Council sets aside an annual budget of around £100,000 for large scale improvements to estate communal areas, such as lighting and parking and communal gardens. TRA's, Area Housing Officers and Scheme Managers propose improvements and these are prioritised by the Housing Consultative Panel. All tenants living near the proposed improvements are also directly consulted for their views.

Once a year a whole day tour is arranged which enables members of the Panel to visit the sites of the proposed improvements. The panel also has direct responsibility for spending a £15,000 Environmental Budget to provide small scale enhancements to communal areas such as hanging baskets, benches etc. Following discussion between the Council and TOLD this budget will be increased to £20,000 from 2010/11.

Who can get involved? 2 representatives elected from each Tenant and Resident Association, Councillors and relevant LDC Staff.

Safeguards and structures in place:

- the Housing Consultative Panel is a constituted group that meets 3 times a year
- the constitution includes detail of membership, how meetings are conducted, how information is shared, how officers are elected, finances, equalities and how the group may be dissolved
- meeting dates are set a year in advance. Dates are printed in Tenants Voice
- agenda items may be submitted 2 weeks before each meeting to the Housing Operations Manager, Housing Services, Lewes House, 32 High Street Lewes BN7 2LX, or by calling (01273) 484266, or emailing housing@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Being a tenant representative at Council Cabinet

The Tenants Federation elect 2 representatives per year to attend Lewes District Council's Cabinet. The Cabinet is the main decision making body of the Council and is made up of elected District Councillors. Tenant representatives may take part in housing discussions and take forward tenants' views on those issues, although they are not entitled to vote.

Who can be involved? 2 representatives elected by TOLD

Safeguards and structures in place:

- cabinet meets monthly
- agendas are pre-set by the Council and are sent out to representatives one week before the meeting.



4.5 High time commitment

Time commitment – Around 4 or more hours per month, regular time commitment

Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD)

TOLD is made up of representatives from all the district TRA's (2 per association) TOLD holds 3 public evening meetings per year, which you are welcome to attend. Only elected reps from each TRA can vote at the meetings.

TOLD's committee also meets with the Housing Services Management Team (SMT) on the last Monday of each month (apart from Bank Holidays and December) to discuss on-going housing issues. SMT feeds directly into these monthly meetings on any issues they would like tenants to consider. You can also raise agenda items for TOLD to consider and are welcome to attend if you wish. TOLD then consult more widely on those issues, via a newsletter to each TRA.

On occasions TOLD may request that a major service review is carried out, which involves setting up a Working Group. See Appendices 3 and 4 for more detail.

TOLD may also ask for a minor service review to be carried out, which could involve a variety of consultation methods, such as setting up a Focus Group, email, surveys etc. See Appendices 3 and 5 for more detail.

Following consultation, any key decisions are taken to TOLD public meetings for their agreement, with final decisions being made by SMT.

TOLD also fundraises and promotes projects which can benefit you and your families, such as an inter-estate 5 a side football project for young people.

Who can be involved? *Two Tenants or Leaseholders elected from each TRA within Lewes District can vote at open meetings. You are welcome to attend open meetings and Committee meetings, but cannot vote unless you are the elected rep from a TRA.*

Safeguards and Structures in place:

- TOLD is a constituted group
- the constitution includes detail of membership; how meetings are conducted; how information is shared; how officers are invited; finances; equalities and how the group may be dissolved
- meeting dates are set a year in advance and are published in Tenants Voice
- agenda items may be submitted two weeks before each meeting to the TOLD Secretary via 2a Horsfield Road Lewes BN7 2TA. Telephone (01273) 487249/483185 email tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Setting up a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) or Local Management Agreement (LMA)

A TMO is a means by which you and your neighbours, as a minimum of 25 households, can collectively take on responsibility for managing the homes you live in. Members of the TMO create an independent legal body and usually elect a tenant led management committee to run the organisation. The TMO can then enter into a legal management agreement (contract) with the Council. The TMO is paid management and maintenance allowances each year in order to carry out the management duties that are delegated to them. The services managed by the TMO vary with local circumstances, but may include day-to-day repairs, allocations and lettings, tenancy management, cleaning and caretaking, and rent collection. If the TMO wish to take over only one element of the management, such as grounds maintenance or communal cleaning, they can ask the Council to help them establish a Local Management Agreement. (LMA)

Who can be involved? Any group of Tenants or Leaseholders within the Lewes District representing over 25 Homes.

Safeguards and Structures in Place:

- the consent of the majority of tenants covered by the proposed area must be obtained before consideration is given
- full training and support for any TMO or LMA management committee must be undertaken before a TMO can be established
- more information can be obtained from a Tenant Empowerment Programme Lead Adviser through www.nftmo.com



HIGH TIME COMMITMENT

4.6 New ways to get involved

During the life of this Compact we will be exploring new ways to involve you and other tenants in housing decisions. All of them have been included in our Compact Action Plan, so that you can see which manager is responsible and when we aim to have achieved each action – see Appendix I.

Contact the Tenant Participation Team for more details on (01273) 487249/483185 or via email at tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Involving under represented groups

The Council recognises that it needs to do more to engage with tenants from ethnic minorities and other under-represented groups such as younger tenants. We will be working to include individuals from those groups who have completed a TRIP form to ensure that they are regularly consulted on housing issues.

Reading Group

A group of tenants not involved in drafting this Compact agreed to read the Compact to help us to ensure that it made sense and that the writing was clear and concise. We plan to set up a formal “Reading Group” of tenants for all new housing publications.

Street/Block Representatives

We will be exploring a way to enable tenants to represent the block or street they live, by becoming a focal point for reporting and feeding back on communal repairs.

Texting and other new IT mediums

As well as ensuring that e-mail consultation is used on a more regular basis, we will be looking at how we can make more use of texting or other IT mediums to consult with you.

Involving more tenants in estate inspections/walkabouts

Although tenants are currently involved in estate walkabouts with Housing Officers, we want to look at opening this up to more tenants and possibly other agencies such as the local police. We shall be looking at a more formal process for advertising walkabout dates and feeding back on the results. See Appendix I

Increasing awareness of your right to manage your homes

In July 2009 we sent out a publication in Housing Link to increase your awareness of your rights to manage your homes. In April 2009 a groups of tenants and housing staff visited an area in London where a Tenant Management Organisation was established. We will continue to publicise details to raise awareness of this right.



Tug of War at Community BBQ

5 SUPPORT FOR TENANT PARTICIPATION

We recognise that tenant participation needs to be well supported if involvement is to be meaningful. This section sets out the financial support, resource support (other than financial), training support, and staff support available.

5.1 Financial support

Tenant Participation budget

An annual budget is made available for Tenant Participation which is reported to TOLD on a quarterly basis.

Two part-time specialist staff are employed directly as tenant participation workers. Other non-specialist housing staff are also fully committed to carrying out involvement work.

The Tenant Participation budget for 2009/10 includes:

- a £4,000 grant for TRA's and TOLD to cover tenant committee members costs and general running costs for the TRA. Costs might include; travel and subsistence; office expenses; room hire; publicity; events and campaigns; IT equipment; insurances and subscriptions
- £2,300 printing and publication expenses for tenant materials such as newsletters, surveys etc.
- £3,600 tenants training costs and expenses to send tenant delegates to conferences
- £3,800 printing costs for Tenants Voice and Housing Link and other publications
- £900 for refreshments to facilitate meetings
- £350 for venue hire for tenants meetings
- £3,580 for running and maintaining a resource centre
- £1,450 out of pocket expenses for all tenant volunteers; taking part in non-TRAVTOLD activities; to cover travel, subsistence, childcare and carer costs
- £2,000 towards community funding such as TOLD 5 a side football project.

For a full breakdown of the budget please contact the Tenant Participation Team on (01273) 487249 /483185, or email tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Grants for TRA's

As mentioned above, grants can be awarded on an annual basis to a recognised TRA with a bank account. The grant is to cover running expenses such as stationery, phone calls, refreshments for meetings and venue hire.

The grant is administered by the Housing Operations Manager, who can be contacted at Housing Services, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes BN7 2LX, or by emailing housing@lewes.gov.uk, or calling (01273) 484266 (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Any planned TRA activities such as community events, day trips etc must be paid for by fundraising undertaken by the TRA.

Out of pocket expenses for tenants

Any tenant or leaseholder that attends any event run by the Council or TOLD, for example training sessions, consultation meetings, focus groups etc. may be able to claim for the following:

- car mileage allowance of 40p per mile
- public transport costs
- taxi fares for those unable to take public transport
- subsistence costs for meals when attending out of area events
- £5.00 per hour care costs
- advocacy costs for tenants with special needs
- costs for assistance with services such as signers, hearing loops etc.
- overnight allowance of £10

Expenses claim forms are available from the Tenant Participation team, for any event that a tenant attends that has been organised by the Council such as Working/Focus groups or training.

Expenses claim forms are available from the TRA/TOLD Treasurer for any TRA committee members attending TRA or TOLD meetings.

Rewards for taking part

As a thank you for taking part in Working Groups, Mystery Shopping and Focus groups, a small token in the form of shopping vouchers, will be awarded to anyone who has given their time.

5.2 Resource support – non financial

Tenants Resource Centre

A Tenants Resource Centre is available to any tenant carrying out community business, at 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes, offering:

- photocopying (there is also access to photocopying at the Housing Office, 20 Fort Road, Newhaven)
- access to internet/e-mail
- flip-chart paper and holder
- laminating
- scanning
- overhead projector
- fax
- desk top publishing
- housing library
- the Tenant Participation team can also provide help, support and advice with fundraising events and fundraising applications

The Council provides Community Rooms at DeMontfort estate and Landport estate Lewes, and on all sheltered schemes. We also provide support to the Cradle Hill Cabin, Seaford.

5.3 Training support

Tenant training

The Council will make it easier for you to become involved by offering you the opportunity to develop your skills and capacity to be involved. TOLD carry out an annual audit of training needs with TRA members and then works with the Council and training providers to meet the needs of the TRA members.

An annual programme of training courses delivered by staff and/or external trainers, such as TPAS, INSTEP and Trafford Hall (see Section 5.6) is agreed and advertised in Housing Link. Subject to demand, this could include:

- a mix of housing related training courses such as tackling anti-social behaviour, technical housing training and community courses such as chairing meetings and promoting involvement
- study visits to other housing organisations
- external conferences, seminars and workshops
- partnerships with other housing providers or agencies to provide low cost training through SETUP (South East Training Uniting People).

South East Training Uniting People (SETUP)

The Council allocates approximately one third of its annual tenants' training budget to SETUP, an organisation that provides low cost local training in the Sussex area. The Councils Tenant Participation team, in partnership with other local housing providers, are members of this organisation.

They agree a programme of five training sessions and one conference per year tailored to the needs of local tenants and residents. The SETUP secretary sends every TRA details of the courses and can arrange transport etc. if needed.

For details of the SETUP training provided please contact the Tenant Participation team on (01273) 487249/483185 or email tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email).

Tenants who attend training will be expected to give feedback about the training to their local TRA or if appropriate to TOLD.

Joint training for tenants & councillors

Opportunities will be developed for tenants and councillors to develop their skills, knowledge and experience together, by attending joint training sessions which are relevant to both. See Compact Action Plan in Appendix I.



5.4 Housing staff support

The Council 's Housing Service is provided by two departments:

- the Housing Services Department deals with all aspects of housing relating to existing council tenants, such as repairs, transfers, rent, etc

See Appendix 6 for full details of Housing Department staff and their roles and responsibilities.

- the Housing Needs and Strategy Department deal with pre tenancy matters, working with Housing Associations to plan where to build new housing etc, homelessness and housing register applicants.

Staff within the Council Housing Service

We want to ensure that the all staff in the Housing Services department are committed to tenant participation, so the Council train staff on legal and regulatory requirements in involvement and national good practice. Staff will also be offered specific training to help them carry out their jobs (e.g. working with TRA's and involving everybody).

In addition to our dedicated Tenant Participation team, all of the Council's front-line staff encourage tenants views, conduct mini surveys whilst on home visits, provide feedback and seek to recruit tenant volunteers. To ensure that involvement is a key priority for all Housing staff, the following measures are in place:

- every member of housing staff has a copy of the Compact and is familiar with the different methods of involvement
- the Council's induction programme for new staff includes details on how to involve tenants in their work
- tenant participation is a standing agenda item at team briefings and this is co-ordinated by the Tenant Participation Manager
- annual tenant involvement briefings are held for all housing staff
- tenant participation targets also feature in all Council Housing staff performance and review processes, where appropriate to the role
- the Council gives support and resources to staff for the additional time that is required to undertake tenant involvement
- SMT meet monthly with TOLD Committee and the TP Manager attends SMT meetings.



5.5 Staff support from other departments in Lewes District Council

Specialist support is available from other departments within Lewes District Council.

Community Services Department

The Community Services Department are responsible for managing a wide range of local facilities including: over 2,000 public car parking spaces; 20 public conveniences; 32 children's play areas and 200 parks; some areas of public open space across the District; some allotments; local amenities such as dealing with anti-social behaviour (NOT caused by Council tenants); the Clean and Green Team and Grass Cutting of land owned by the Council (not verges).

Contact details:

Telephone: (01273) 484999

Email: customer.services@lewes.gov.uk

We work particularly closely with the following people from Community Services:

Parks and Gardens Manager, who provides input into the HCP consultation regarding play areas, as well as consultation on grass cutting contracts

Telephone (01273) 484999.

Anti-social Behaviour Coordinator who works with the Crime Reduction Partnership and deals with antisocial behaviour, not caused by Council tenants

Telephone (01273) 484394.

Waste and Recycling Department

The Waste department deals with rubbish collection, bulky household waste collection and street cleaning.

Contact Details:

Telephone: (01273) 484999, Minicom: (01273) 484488

Email: customer.services@lewes.gov.uk

The Recycling Department deals with kerbside recycling, (plastic bottles, cans and aluminium foil, glass bottles, jars and paper). If you live in a block of flats which are more than two storeys high, then different rules apply and you may not be able to join the scheme. For details of the provision of recycling facilities at key sites in the district, please go to

www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/WRS_Recycling_Sites.pdf

Contact Details:

Community Recycling Centre, North Street, Lewes, Sussex, BN7 2PE

Telephone (01273) 484999, Minicom: (01273) 484488

Email: customer.services@lewes.gov.uk

Finance Department

The Finance Department deals with all aspects of the collection and payment of the following: Council tax; business rates; fees, charges; Council tax and Housing Benefits; concessionary bus passes; benefit fraud investigation; investments and borrowing.

Contact Details:

Finance Department, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes BN7 2LX

Telephone: (01273) 471600,

Minicom: (01273) 484488

Email: finance@lewes.gov.uk

Environmental Health

Environmental Health are responsible for dealing with noise nuisance in partnership with Area Housing Officers. They are also responsible for pest control, and control of statutory nuisance such as smoke from bonfires etc.

The Clean and Green Team

Are a dedicated team of people working together to make your local community clean and safe. The aim of the team is to educate and inform the public about environmental crimes. The team, consisting of a Senior Street Warden, two Street Wardens, two Parks Wardens and two Animal Wardens, have been trained and given the powers and responsibilities to tackle Environmental Crime.

Contact Details:

Telephone (01273) 484999

Email: customer.services@lewes.gov.uk

Animal Wardens

They can give help or advice about the care of animals and also investigate complaints about stray dogs, dangerous dogs and animal cruelty. They also deal with matters such as dog mess or barking dogs, and can supply information packs for schools promoting responsible dog ownership.

Contact Details:

Telephone (01273) 484354

Email: ehealth@lewes.gov.uk

5.6 Support from other agencies

The Council are aware that tenants are interested in issues which are broader than those relating to housing. Good quality, well-maintained housing is essential in contributing to community well being, but is not enough in isolation to create thriving communities. We work together with other organisations to tackle a wide range of issues and to develop partnerships, which help to target resources where they are most needed. The main organisations that we work with to achieve these aims include:

Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH)

The Association of Retained Council Housing 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 lobby Government to get the best deal for their tenants.

www.arch-housing.org.uk

Action for Rural Sussex

Their vision for Sussex is that it is a place where an inclusive, active, community life is valued equally alongside economic success and environmental protection, and where all three are pursued together. They work mainly within the villages in Lewes District.

Sussex House, 212 High Street, Lewes, Sussex. BN7 2NH

Telephone: (01273) 473422

www.ruralsussex.org.uk

Age Concern East Sussex

Age Concern have joined together with Help the Aged to form a new national charity dedicated to improving the lives of older people.

54 Cliffe High Street, Lewes, Sussex, BN7 2AN

Telephone: (01273) 476704

www.ageconcern-eastsussex.org.uk

Anchor Staying Put

Provide a service to older and disabled homeowners across England, helping them with repairs, adaptations and improvements so that they can remain in safety, security and warmth.

1st Floor, 32/33 Vicarage Fields, Hailsham, BN27 1BG.

Telephone: (01323) 441013

www.stayingput.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Citizens Advice Bureaux offer free advice and information on matters like debt, housing and legal proceedings. Their confidential and impartial service is open to everybody, regardless of race, sex, disability, sexuality or nationality. www.citizensadvice.org.uk

East Sussex County Council (ESCC)

Are responsible for Highways, Education, Adult Social Care, Council Tax, Council Badges, registering of birth, deaths and marriages, etc.

County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1UE

Telephone: 0345 60 80 190

East Sussex Disability Association (ESDA)

Enables disabled people in East Sussex to achieve independence and control over their own lives.

1 Faraday Close, Eastbourne, Sussex, BN22 9BH.

Telephone: (01323) 514500

www.esda.org.uk/home/221

InStep

InSTEP is a national organisation that provides information and training services to tenants in social housing. They offer a number of services to help tenants and landlords to work together, to inform and empower tenants and encourage tenant participation

Telephone: 0500 844 111

www.instepservices.co.uk

Lewes District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The Lewes District LSP (also known as "Local Voices, Local Choices") is made up of representatives from the business, community, voluntary and statutory sectors, as well as representatives from the five Area Partnerships covering the towns of Newhaven, Seaford, Peacehaven, Telscombe and Lewes, as well as the rural parts of the district. The shared vision of the partnership is to improve the quality of lives for the residents of the district. More information about the LSP and the work of these Area Partnerships is available at www.lvlc.info

Local Action Team (LAT)

Local Action Teams (LATs) were set up by the Crime Reduction Partnership to bring together police, housing and antisocial behaviour officers with youth development workers, local councillors, neighbourhood watch members and community representatives. They look at issues affecting their local community and, by working together, see how these can be resolved.

There are 4 Local Action Teams, 1 for each town. To get in touch with your LAT, use the addresses below.

leweslat@lewes.gov.uk

newhavenlat@lewes.gov.uk

peacehavenlat@lewes.gov.uk

seafordlat@lewes.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can contact the Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator for the district on **(01273) 484394**.

Neighbourhood Panels

These are set up in 21 areas of the district. Sussex Police are the lead partner. Each Neighbourhood Panel is asked to identify the top 3 priorities for that area. These priorities can be any issue that causes anxiety to the community and need not necessarily involve crime matters. The Panel should consist of tenants and traders, local Councillors, local police staff and anyone else whose involvement would enhance the panel.

For more details please see www.lewesnp.co.uk

National Communities Resource Centre (Trafford Hall)

Provide low cost residential courses which aim to bring people together to share ideas and experiences, learn new skills and increase levels of confidence. The courses are designed to meet the needs of a diverse range of families, young people and adults.

Telephone: (01244) 300246

www.traffordhall.com/index.php

Newhaven Community Development Association (NCDA)

Aims to develop sustainable community-based regeneration initiatives addressing the economic, environmental, cultural and community needs of Newhaven.

The Hillcrest Centre, Hillcrest Road, Newhaven, Sussex, BN9 9EA

Telephone: (01273) 612539

www.ncda.org.uk

Parish and Town Councils

We work closely with parish and town councils throughout the Lewes District Council area. Services that parish and town councils may provide include: allotments; bus shelters; grants for local projects/organisations; halls for social clubs and meetings; street lighting, some recreation/sports fields; traffic calming measures and war memorial maintenance.

Barcombe Parish Council www.barcombe.net

Chailey Parish Council www.chailey.org

Ditchling Parish Council www.ditchlingpc.org.uk

East Chiltington Parish Council www.east-chiltington.co.uk

Firle Parish Council

Glynde Parish Council www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/Glynde

Hamsey Parish Council www.hamsey.net

Kingston Parish Council www.kingston-lewes-pc.gov.uk

Lewes Town Council www.lewes-tc.gov.uk

Newhaven Town Council www.newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk/

Newick Parish Council www.newick.net

Peacehaven Town Council www.peacehavencouncil.co.uk

Plumpton Parish Council www.plumptonpc.co.uk

Ringmer Parish Council www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk

Seaford Town Council www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Telscombe Town Council www.telscombetowncouncil.gov.uk

Wivelsfield Parish Council www.wivelsfield.net

Resource Centre in Brighton

Have a wide range of equipment for hire to community or voluntary groups based in Sussex, to help groups run successful fetes, fairs, meetings and other events.

Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY

Telephone: (01273) 606160

www.resourcecentre.org.uk

South Downs Council for Voluntary Services (SDCVS)

Aims to improve the capacity and quality of voluntary and community groups, develop and strengthen small or emerging local projects by enabling access to SDCVS services.

66 High Street, Lewes, Sussex, BN7 1XG

Telephone: (01273) 483832

www.southdownscvs.org.uk

Sompriti

Sompriti is a black and minority ethnic charity based in Lewes. Their aims are to empower black and minority ethnic people, build flourishing communities, advance race equality and challenge and address racism and related discrimination.

66 High Street, Lewes BN7 1XG

Telephone: (01273) 477550

www.sompriti.com

Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)

TPAS aims to extend the reach and quality of tenant influence by working with social housing tenants and landlords to develop successful partnerships by supporting tenants and community groups to take on a more representative role.

Telephone: (0161) 868 3500

www.tpas.org.uk

Tenant Service Authority (TSA)

The TSA is the independent regulator charged with promoting and championing the interests of tenants in social housing in England. From 2010 the TSA will be the regulator for local authorities in England.

You can find out more about the TSA on its website

www.tenantservicesauthority.org.uk

Wave Leisure

Manage the Downs, Lewes and Peacehaven Leisure Centres, Seahaven Swim & Fitness Centre and Seaford Head Pool.

www.waveleisure.co.uk

Youth Development Service

The Youth Development Service helps young people to understand and act on personal, social and political issues which affect them and their communities, taking responsibility for developing those communities.

Youth Development Service, Suite G6, Waterside Centre, Lewes BN7 2PE

Telephone: (01273) 479790

www.eastsussex.gov.uk

WelBeing (Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline)

Provide the Lifeline alarm service for elderly or vulnerable tenants across the Lewes district as well as Eastbourne and Wealden.

Telephone: (01323) 644422, minicom (01323) 415111

www.welbeing.org.uk



Tenants at Conference enjoy lunch

6 ENSURING THIS COMPACT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

6.1 Monitoring the Compact and Housing Services

TOLD and SMT monitor the Compact and its Action Plan as well as other key housing documents and services. They have agreed a monitoring timetable which is set out below. The managers responsible will present the necessary information to TOLD for discussion and agree if any action is needed.

What	How often	Manager responsible	When
Top Table Action Plan (to include top 7 actions being impact assessed)	Monthly	Tenant Participation Manager	Monthly
Compact Action Plan	Twice a year	Tenant Participation Manager	Mar/Aug
Departmental Action Plan (DAP)	Yearly	Housing Projects Manager	May
Business Plan	As needed	Head of Housing	As needed
Incidents of ASB & how dealt with	Yearly	Estates Manager	April
Complaints, including follow up on 'poor' repairs	Yearly	Housing Maintenance Manager	October
Budget proposals	During Winter	Director of Finance	October to Jan
Community Development Plan	Yearly	Tenant Participation Manager	November
Report on CBL progress	During 2009/10 6 monthly	Housing Operations Manager	Jan/Jun
Housing Link/Tenants Voice planning	3 times a year	Head of Housing and Tenants Voice Editor	Jan//May/Sept
Impact Assessment Report	Yearly	TP Manager	Feb

6.2 Assessing the impact of key changes to service

Every year TOLD and the Council will review the impact of its tenant involvement activities to assess if a difference has been made. The main principles of impact assessments are:

- to see what has changed as a result of tenant involvement activities
- to see how the activity has helped the Council and its groups meet its main objectives
- to see what difference the activity has made for tenants, the neighbourhood and the Council
- to identify how much the activities cost and whether they were value for money
- to see what difference was made in terms of equalities i.e. is there better access to services that meets the needs of tenants?
- to see what difference TRA's have made to their local communities
- to identify whether any improvements can be made to the activities
- to see whether the goals agreed in the Compact Action Plan have been achieved

The results will form an Annual Impact Assessment Report, sent to you once a year, detailing what we have achieved and our priorities as agreed for the coming year with involved tenants.

In consultation with you, we will be clear about the aims before undertaking any new tenant involvement activity and will be prepared to stop any activity where the benefits are unclear. Those activities that demonstrate clear gains for both the organisation and its tenants will be given maximum focus.

TOLD have agreed 7 activities listed below that will be impact assessed during 2009/10, and are included in the Compact Action Plan – Appendix I. They will be monitored at the TOLD monthly meetings.

What will be impact Assessed?

- the introduction of mystery shopping
- to ensure lowest possible rent increase for 2010/11
- the review of Housing Link to include a consultation page
- identification of under-represented groups, to actively seek to canvas their views
- involvement of more tenants in estate walkabouts
- compilation of a new Community Development Plan to raise the profile of TRA's
- improvement tenant satisfaction with standards of grounds maintenance on Housing Land

6.3 Complaints under this Compact

What should I do if I am unhappy with issues relating to this Compact?

We welcome any complaints or comments you would like to make about this Compact. In the first instance, report your complaint or comment to the Tenant Participation Manager, who will try to resolve the situation within 10 working days. If you then feel that your complaint has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, please contact the Secretary of TOLD, who will arrange for the issue to be discussed at the next monthly TOLD meeting.

Contact the TP Manager via tenant.particiation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email) or call (01273) 487249.

Contact the Secretary of TOLD at 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes BN7 2TA.

TOLD will try to resolve your complaint together with the Housing Department's Senior Management Team at their monthly meeting and come back to you with a proposed resolution. If you are still not satisfied with their response you can ask for the matter to be referred to an independent mediation service who will negotiate with you and the council to try and find an amicable solution. The Council will fund this service.

If following mediation, you wish to take the matter further then you have the right to approach the Local Government Ombudsman. The council can advise you how to do this.





Working group meeting

Appendix 1 - Compact Action Plan 2009–2012

This Compact Action plan relates to all planned activities that tenants will be involved in during 2009-2012. The Plan will be updated annually and monitored by TOLD. All of these Actions have been identified and agreed by TOLD and SMT. Actions that will be impact assessed are highlighted in pink.

Ref	Action	Planned outcomes	Monitoring planned outcomes	Who can be involved and how	Date for completion of actions	Housing Manager responsible
Priority One						
To maximise the Council housing stock available to let						
Department 1 Action Plan DAP 1.3	Review the implementation of Choice Based Lettings	To ensure new policy gives best possible choice to tenants	Working Group and TOLD to review outcome of policy change to try and ensure existing tenants are not disadvantaged under the new system	Tenant/staff involved in CBL working group. Details reported to TOLD and any changes reported in Housing Link	October 2009	Housing Operations Manager
DAP 1.5	Review current Move On procedures including under occupation and the Tenant Incentive Scheme	More tenants moved from under-occupied properties	Improved take up of Tenant Incentive Scheme. Monitored by TOLD	Tenant/staff involvement in Move On Working group. Survey in Housing Link. Reports to TOLD	April 2010	Housing Projects Manager
Priority Two						
To maintain and improve the condition of the Housing stock						
Compact Action 1	Explore setting up block representative scheme, to enable tenants/leaseholders to monitor and feedback on communal repairs.	Increased tenant satisfaction with communal repairs	Analysis of returned job completed forms	TOLD Possible focus group	December 2011	Maintenance Manager

Ref	Action	Planned outcomes	Monitoring planned outcomes	Who can be involved and how	Date for completion of actions	Housing Manager responsible
Priority Three						
To foster tenant empowerment and partnership with other stakeholders						
Compact Action 2	Set up a tenant reading group for housing publications	Improve tenant satisfaction by providing clearer information	Monitor tenant satisfaction by including a question in status survey to gauge tenant satisfaction with housing publications	Tenant/ Councillor/ staff volunteers	October 2009	TP Manager
DAP 3.2	Introduce Mystery Shopping	Improve tenant satisfaction with customer care and increased tenant involvement in reviewing services	Improvements recommended by mystery shoppers agreed. Increase in tenant satisfaction in next Status Survey	Tenant mystery shoppers. Three mystery shops held this year	December 2009	TP Manager
DAP 3.4	Review Housing Link (tenants in Status Survey 2008 said they prefer to be consulted by newsletter). Include a new consultation page	Improved tenant satisfaction with opportunities for involvement in housing service decisions	Check number of responses to consultation page. Include question in next Status Survey to ask if tenants happy with opportunities for involvement	Tenants at a focus group meeting and TOLD	April 2010	TP Manager
DAP 3.5	Identify under represented groups. Actively seek to canvass their views	Improved tenants' satisfaction with opportunities for involvement from under represented groups	Monitor groups satisfaction by including a question in next Status Survey to gauge satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	Tenants and leaseholders identified using TRIP, and Census Survey information etc	December 2009	TP Manager/ Office Manager
Compact Action 2	Ensure lowest possible rent increase for 2010/11	Increased tenant satisfaction with value for money for rent	Check for improved results from next Status Survey for "value for money" compared to results from 2008/9 survey	Tenant/Staff Working Group	January 2010	TP Manager

Ref	Action	Planned outcomes	Monitoring planned outcomes	Who can be involved and how	Date for completion of actions	Housing Manager responsible
Compact Action 3	Explore texting and other IT mediums	Improved tenant satisfaction with communication. Use texting to promote meetings, walkabouts etc	Monitor number of responses to text/email	Tenants and leaseholders. advertise via Housing Link consultation page	June 2010	TP Manager
Compact Action 4	Explore texting and other IT mediumsExplore inviting tenants to appropriate training set up by the Council for councillors and explore inviting councillors to SETUP training	Improved tenants and councillors knowledge and skills to support involvement	TOLD to monitor take up of training by councillors and tenants	Tenants and councillors, via SETUP and Council based training sessions	April 2010	TP Manager
Priority Four						
To provide good quality housing services that meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders and take account of diversity						
Compact Action 5	Involve more tenants in estate walkabouts and improve publicity of walkabouts and reporting back of actions to be taken	Improved tenant satisfaction with standards on estates	Check results from next status survey compared to results from 2008/9 survey. Monitor how many people attend the walkabouts	Tenants via estate walkabouts	December 2009	Estates Manager
DAP 4.6	To review Housing Service standards, see appendix 2. (Make recommendations for revised standards that may be easier to measure)	Tenants enabled to test our services more effectively as standards easier to measure	Mystery shoppers will test new standards	Tenants via working/focus group and mystery shopping	May 2010	TP Manager

Ref	Action	Planned outcomes	Monitoring planned outcomes	Who can be involved and how	Date for completion of actions	Housing Manager responsible
Priority Five						
To promote sustainable communities, particularly within the housing stock						
DAP 5.2	Compile a new Housing Community Development Plan (Sets out past achievements and 2 year plans for TRA's)	To publicise and raise the profile of TRA's across the district	TOLD to monitor progress of plan annually	All TRA's consulted. Details in Housing Link. Staff advised via staff briefing.	December 2009	TP Manager
Compact Action 6	Raise awareness of Credit Unions amongst tenants and residents	More tenants encouraged and assisted in becoming members of Credit Union	Analyse how many new people from the Lewes District Council area have joined scheme	All tenants via Housing Link and TOLD open meeting	March 2010	TP Manager
Priority Six						
To ensure good and continually improving environmental performance in our housing stock and related activity						
Compact Action 7	Implement new 10 year Ground Maintenance Contract	Improved tenant satisfaction with standards of ground maintenance	Check tenant satisfaction levels with new contract via consultation page in Housing Link	Tenants via Working Group. Survey to all tenants affected.. Info via Housing Link	April 2011	Parks Manager

Appendix 2 – Housing Service Standards

The following Housing Service Standards were set by the Council and tenants in 2003. The standards are monitored by TOLD annually. A full review of the standards is planned for 2010.

Our commitment to customers

The Council will:

- provide good value, efficient and effective services to all our customers
- provide services that everyone can use and to make our premises and information as accessible as possible
- ensure that our premises are clean, comfortable, smoke-free and well sign-posted
- treat everyone fairly and respect their privacy
- be open, honest and accountable for our actions
- consult and listen to our customers
- strive for continuous improvement in our services and processes.



Our service aims are to:

- maximise the letting of Council homes
- maintain and improve the condition of Council homes in the District
- foster tenant empowerment and partnership with all stakeholders
- provide good quality housing services that meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders and take account of diversity
- promote sustainable communities, particularly within Council housing
- ensure good and continually improving environmental performance within our housing and other related activities
- collect all charges related to the housing service efficiently.



Our information will:

- be clear, up to date and accurate
- be available in a range of formats and languages on request
- we monitor our performance regularly and set targets to improve the services we provide.



General Standards – Our staff will:

- be helpful, polite and professional when dealing with customers
- wear name badges when dealing with customers
- provide a private interview room if requested
- arrange a convenient date and time for visits, meetings or appointments
- show you an official ID badge without being asked if they need to make a home visit
- try to deal with your enquiry or complaint straight away. If the person you need to speak to is unavailable, they will contact you as soon as possible.



- answer the phone within 20 seconds and return phone messages within 1 working day
- when we need to use answer phones, messages will be checked regularly
- answer your letter, fax or email within 7 working days using Plain English and avoiding jargon
- if the response is likely to take longer an acknowledgement will be sent confirming when you can expect a reply
- respond to Freedom of Information requests within 20 working days
- apologise if we are at fault and do their best to put things right. Complaints referred to the head of service will be dealt with in 20 working days.

Estate management – We will

- inspect all estates/communal areas every 12 weeks
- remove abandoned and illegally parked cars on Council land within 8 weeks
- respond to complaints of harassment, neighbourhood nuisance or anti-social behaviour within 7 days
- re-let empty homes to an agreed standard
- provide all new tenants with a Tenants Handbook explaining their rights and responsibilities.



Rent collection and arrears recovery – We will

- advise all new tenants of payment options and ways of accessing all relevant benefits
- take action on rent arrears after 2 weeks
- provide advice and support to tenants having difficulties paying their rent.



Tenant participation – We will

- encourage the setting up of Tenants' Groups
- hold an annual Tenants Conference
- provide a Tenants Resource Centre in Lewes and access to administrative support in other areas
- provide a minimum of 2 meetings a year for tenants to monitor the housing service
- review our Tenant Compact every 3 years
- send out our newsletter 'Housing Link' and tenants newsletter 'Tenants Voice', to all Council homes 3 times a year.



Repairs – We will

- provide an emergency out of hours service
- carry out all emergency repairs within 24 hours
- offer appointments for all non-emergency repairs
- notify you in writing when repair work is to be carried out
- give you a feedback form to comment on the work that has been carried out and investigate all reports of poor service within 4 weeks
- leave a card saying we called if no-one is at home.



Transfer and exchanges – We will

- forward all applications for transfer to the Sussex Homemove scheme within 7 days
- process all applications for mutual exchange within 6 weeks.



Supported housing and Lifeline – We will

- provide a 24 hour alarm call monitoring service to our sheltered schemes when the scheme manager is not available
- provide the services of a scheme manager on all our schemes
- provide a service appropriate to the needs of the individual.

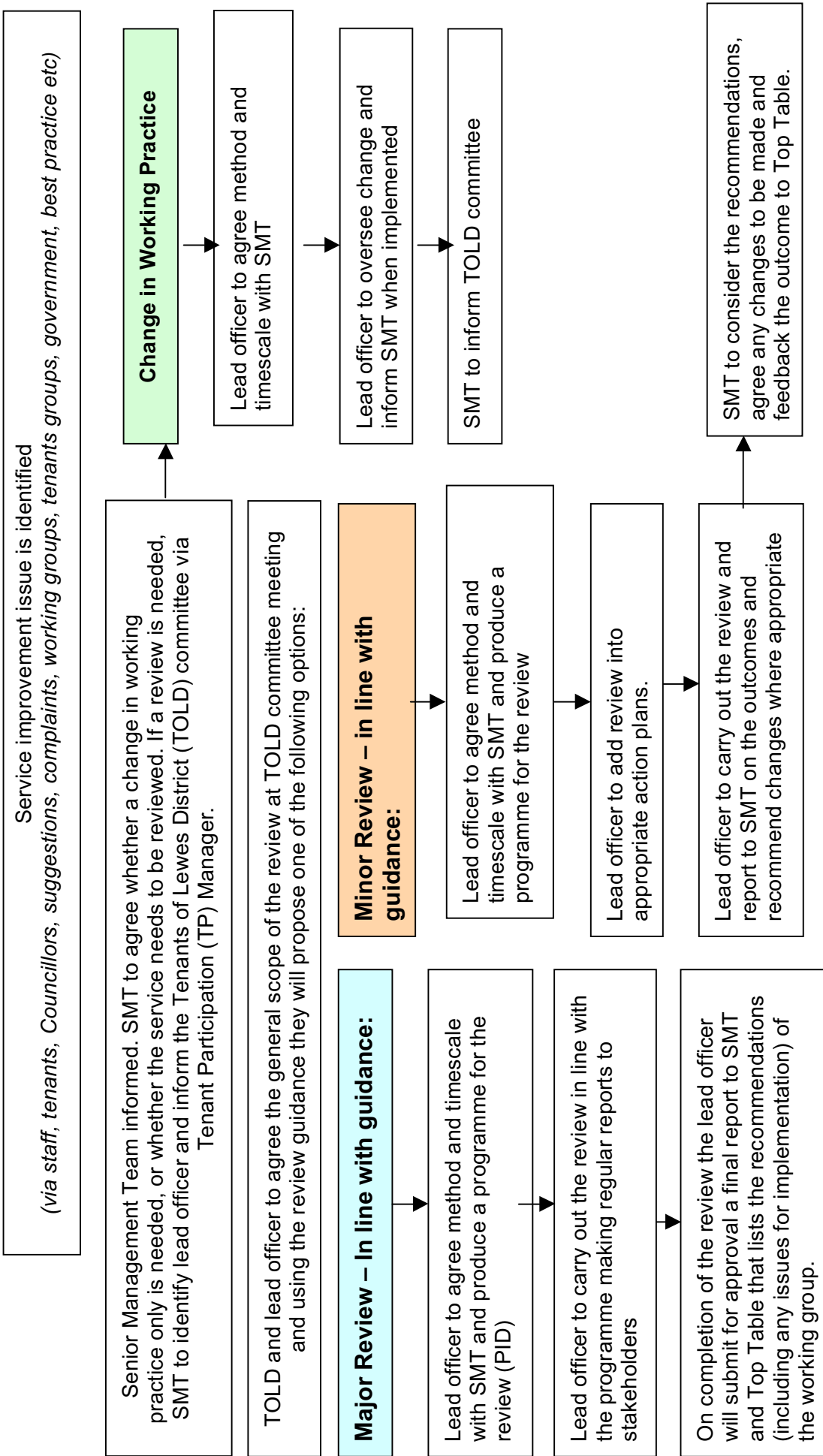


In order for us to help us to help you, we ask that:

- you be polite in dealing with our staff. We will not tolerate abusive language or violent behaviour towards them
- give us all the information we need to deal with your request
- let us know in advance if you need to cancel an appointment
- let us know in advance if you need a signer or interpreter
- tell us immediately if you are unhappy with a service, giving us as much detail as possible
- give us ideas, comments and suggestions
- help us to care for our environment
- comply with our Health and Safety regulations which are there to protect you.



Appendix 3 – How do the Council and tenants review a service (please also see Appendix 4 and 5 - review guidance)



Appendix 4 – Guidance for a Major Review of the Housing Service

All Major Reviews are conducted by a Working Group. This represents all parties, called stakeholders, who have an interest in the service under review. The Working Group is led by a lead officer with the assistance of the tenant participation (TP) team. All Major Reviews are to be included in the Departmental Action Plan (DAP). The following should be adopted once Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD) committee have agreed that a Major Review is appropriate:

Set up a working group

SMT and lead officer to agree:

- which other staff to involve in initial working group discussions
- who will facilitate the working group meetings
- which other stakeholders may need to be involved.

The lead officer will then:

- ask the TP team and TOLD Committee to recruit tenant volunteers to the Working Group by any of the following: drafting a Housing Link article, asking Tenants' and Residents' Associations for volunteers, via an article on Housing website, discussion at TOLD quarterly meetings
- ask the TP Manager to write to the lead Councillor for Housing advising that the review is to take place and inviting the participation of Councillors
- once the participants have been identified, organise an initial working group meeting
- the lead officer may decide to hold staff only and tenant only pre-meetings prior to the joint meeting for both parties to agree their individual priorities.

Develop and agree a programme for the review

The first task for the newly formed Working Group is to develop a programme for the review. This should include:

- the purpose and detailed scope of the review
- what the working group will be doing: activities, meetings and tasks to be included in a timetable
- whether other stakeholders need to be involved
- whether training is required by tenants in order for them to take part effectively
- how often progress reports should be made to SMT, Housing Consultative Panel and TOLD
- how tenants will be kept updated e.g via Housing Link

SMT will then need to approve the programme.

Carry out the review.

Throughout the review the Working Group should:

- identify possible service improvements and how they might be implemented
- consult further with other stakeholders to obtain their views on potential service Improvements – TP team can assist with consulting tenants
- gather evidence of best practice from other sources, such as Housemark, or from other housing providers
- include methods for checking that any proposed improvements are successful.

Once the review is complete

When the working group has finished:

- the lead officer will prepare a final report for SMT and the TOLD committee, listing the outcomes and proposed service improvements. This should also include a summary of additional resources which may be needed and, if appropriate, suggestions for approach
- the SMT and TOLD committee will consider the recommendations and if they are accepted, agree an implementation plan.

TOLD wil monitor the progress implementation of actions and outcomes.



Appendix 5 - Guidance for a Minor Review of the Housing Service

Each minor review will probably need a different approach, depending on what's being reviewed and who may be affected. However the basic principles are:

- Senior Management Team (SMT) and Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD) committee have agreed that a minor review is to take place and a lead officer will have been identified to carry out the review
- the lead officer will agree with SMT an approach for carrying out the review and produce a programme that outlines what this will be. The programme should include the purpose of the review, who will be consulted and how, and a timetable.

During the review the following needs to happen:

- appropriate staff must be consulted for their opinions and be made aware of any changes that may affect them
- tenants must be consulted for their opinions and made aware of any changes that may affect them. This can be done in a variety of ways. The lead officer should choose the most appropriate methods from the following:
- a Focus Group meeting can be set up – Tenant Participation (TP) team can assist with this
- Tenants and Residents Associations can be consulted via the TOLD Committee – TP team to assist
- Tenant Representatives and Councillors can be consulted via the Housing Consultative Panel – Housing Operations Manager to assist
- existing specialist tenant groups can be approached for input e.g Sheltered Forum
- one-off survey of service users can be carried out – lead officer to arrange
- questions can be raised on the Council's website – Office Manager can assist
- postal survey can be carried out with 200 existing tenant volunteers – TP team can assist
- article in Housing Link can be published – lead officer to arrange
- other stakeholders must be consulted and made aware of any changes that may affect them e.g contractors
- evidence of best practice from other sources should be considered e.g look at Housemark or research other housing providers
- a method for checking that any proposed changes to service are successful should be developed.

Once the review is completed:

- the lead officer will provide a report to SMT of the outcome and any proposed changes. This report will also include a summary of any additional resources which may be needed and if appropriate the method of approach for making changes. SMT will consider the recommendations, agree any changes to be made and feedback the outcome to TOLD.

Appendix 6 – Who’s Who in Lewes District Council Housing

Housing Services Department

The Housing Services Department deals with a variety of tenancy issues which include:

- letting of the Council's properties
- advice to tenants at the commencement of their tenancy
- variations of tenancy
- transfers
- exchanges
- advice on rights of succession and assignment
- tenancy rights
- enforcement of tenancy conditions
- managing antisocial behaviour
- transfer requests
- caretaking and cleaning

Please see next page for more details and a flow-chart of responsibilities.

Housing Needs and Strategy Department

The Housing Needs and Strategy department works with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies, to meet housing needs of people across Lewes District.

The Housing Needs section deals with issues which include

- housing advice
- homelessness
- nominations to registered social landlords (housing associations)
- other housing schemes (such as low-cost home ownership and rent deposit guarantee schemes).
- choice based lettings

The Housing Strategy section are responsible for identifying the current housing needs of Lewes District, drawing up action plans to meet these needs, seeking funding and working with registered social landlords to provide affordable homes.

Head of Housing

Responsible for overall running of the Housing Services Department and Housing Needs and Strategy
Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes. BN7 1AB
Phone (01273) 484380

Housing Maintenance Manager

Overall responsibility for day to day housing repairs and long term planned improvements to properties.

Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes
BN7 1AB
Phone (01273) 484378

Contracts Manager

Responsible for the service contracts ie heating, lifts, re-wiring etc. and rewiring Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes BN7 1AB

Phone: (01273) 484377

Office Manager

Assistance with administration of Saffron Integrated Housing system and provision of administrative service to Housing Services

Phone: (01273) 484321

Senior
Maintenance Surveyor
Phone: (01273) 484391

Principal
Architect
Phone:
(01273) 484386

Housing Maintenance
Unit Supervisor
Phone: (01273) 484296

Repair Clerks
Responsible for taking repair calls
Phone: (01273) 484448

Contracts
Surveyor
Phone: (01273)
484371

Area
Maintenance
Officers
Phone:
(01273) 484448

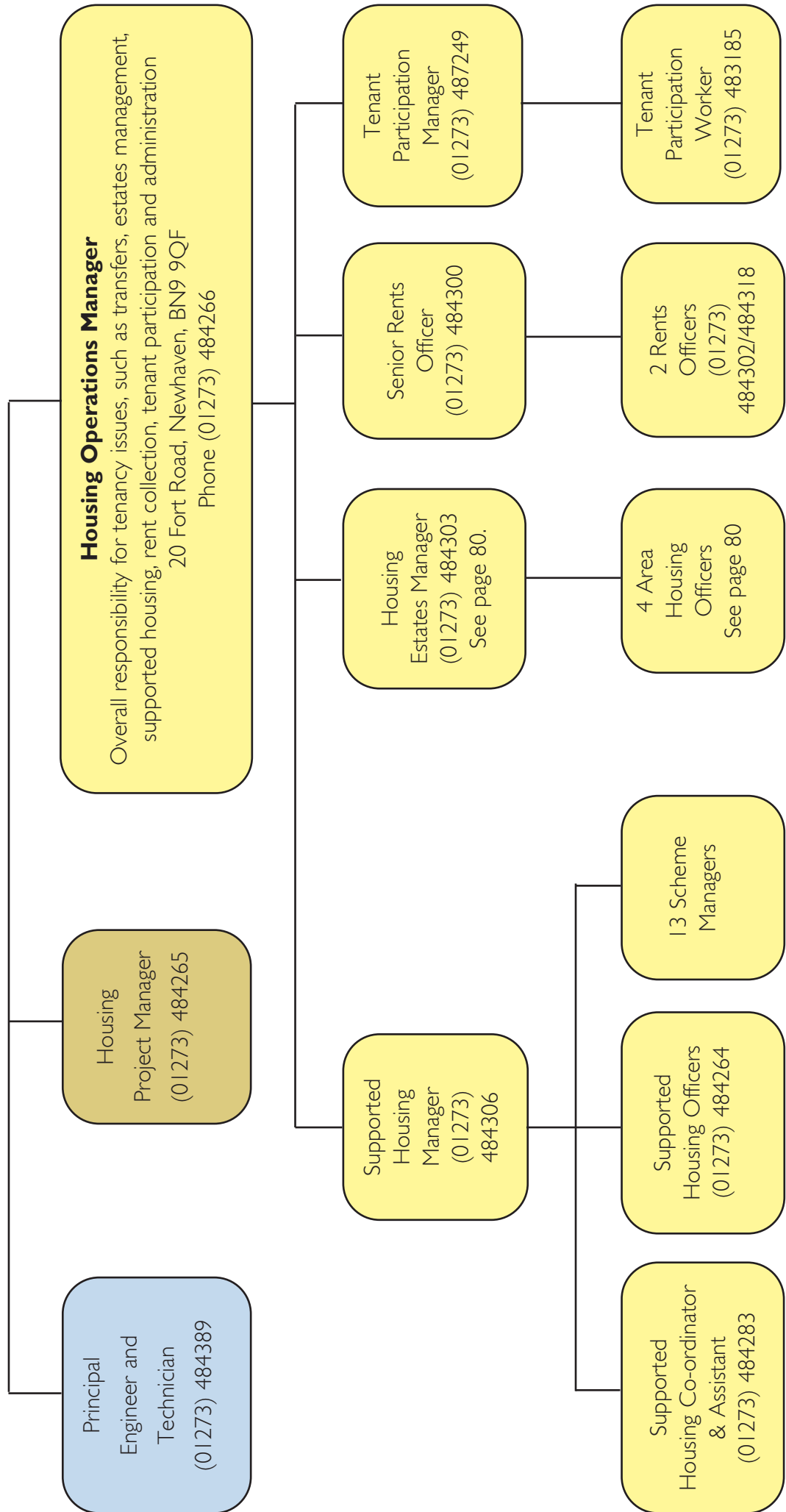
Maintenance
Surveyor
Phone: (01273) 484448

Housing Maintenance
Unit
Phone: (01273) 484296

Receptionists
Phone: (01273) 471600

Head of Housing

Responsible for overall running of the Housing Department
Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes. BN7 1AB
Phone (01273) 484380



Who's Who in Housing Needs and Strategy Department

Head of Housing

Responsible for overall running of the Housing Department
Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes. BN7 1AB
Phone (01273) 484380

Housing Needs and Strategy Manager

Responsible for the Management of Division & development of services to meet housing needs, promotion of partnerships in the Community Care and Joint Planning Process.
2 Fisher Street, Lewes, BN7 2DQ, Phone (01273) 484019

Policy and Development Officer

Assistance with the development and review of the Council Housing Strategy/Housing Capital Programme, liaison with Registered Social Landlords and representation of the Council in the Community Care Planning process
2 Fisher Street, Lewes, BN7 2DQ
Phone (01273) 484016

Housing Needs Manager

Leadership of the Housing Needs Team, responsible for homelessness and housing advice, the Housing Register, allocations, nominations to Registered Social Landlords and other housing Schemes.
2 Fisher Street, Lewes, BN7 2DQ
Phone (01273) 484095

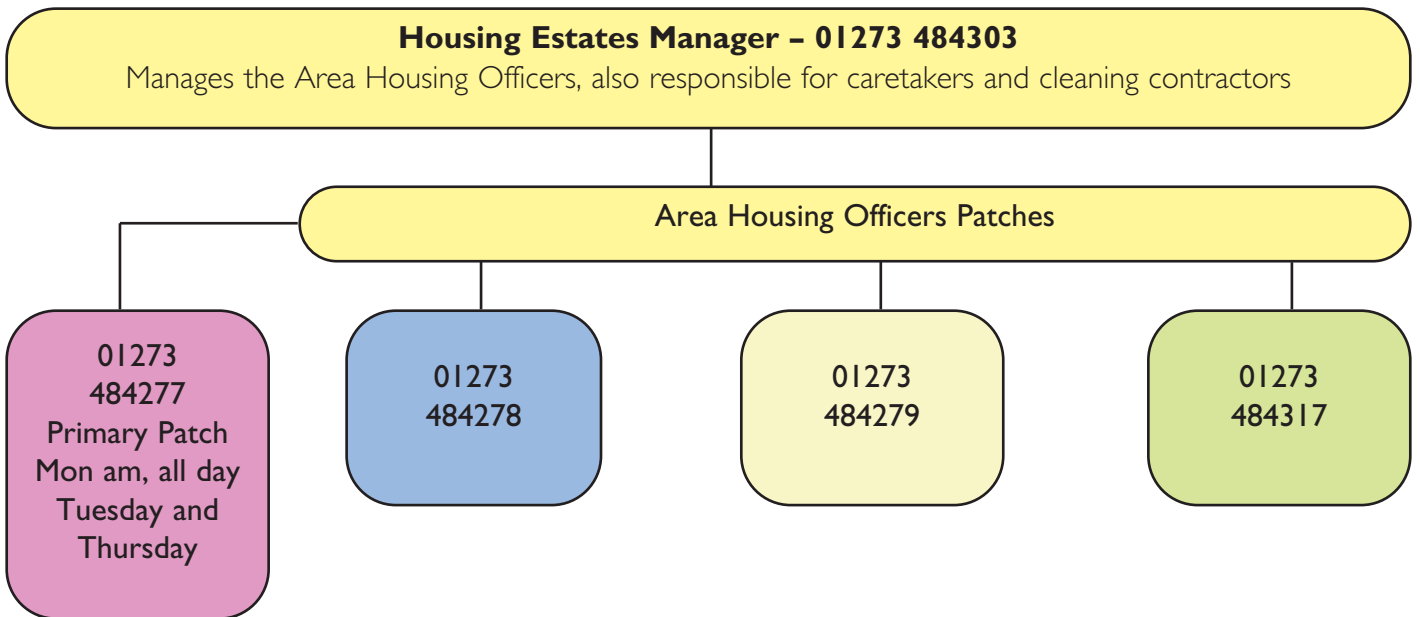
Homelessness Officers

Housing Admin Officers

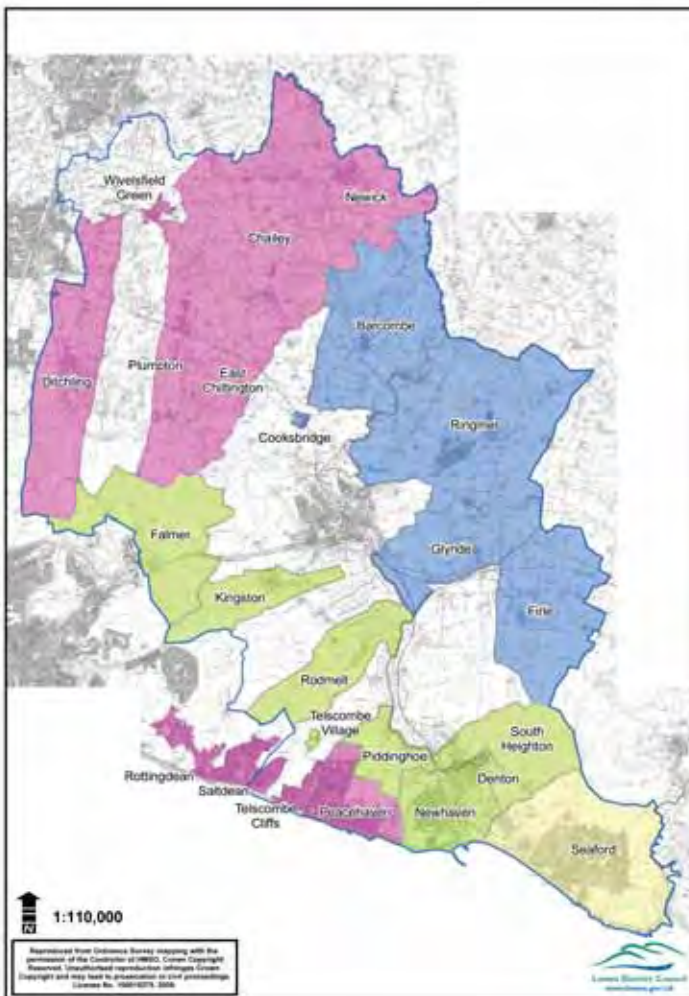
Special Needs and Temporary Accommodation Officers

Housing Estates Department

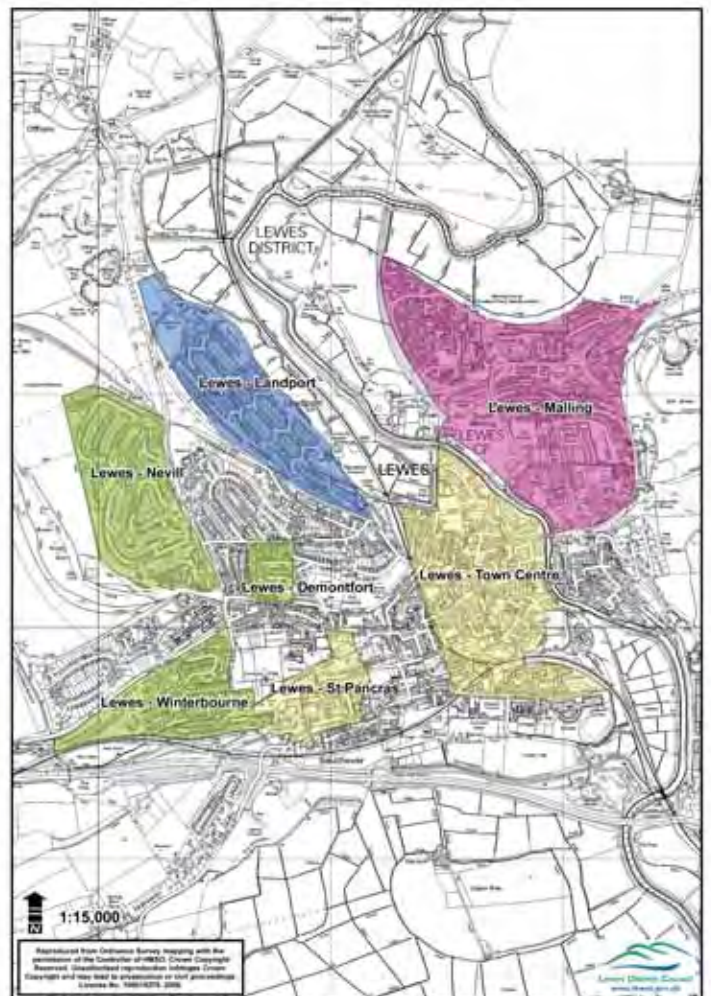
This department has overall responsibility for tenancy issues, such as transfers, estates management, supported housing, rent collection, caretakers, cleaning contractors and tenant participation. There is a team of Area Housing Officers who deal with tenancy issues on a day to day basis. The 2 maps below show area housing officer patches in Lewes and the wider district.



Wider District



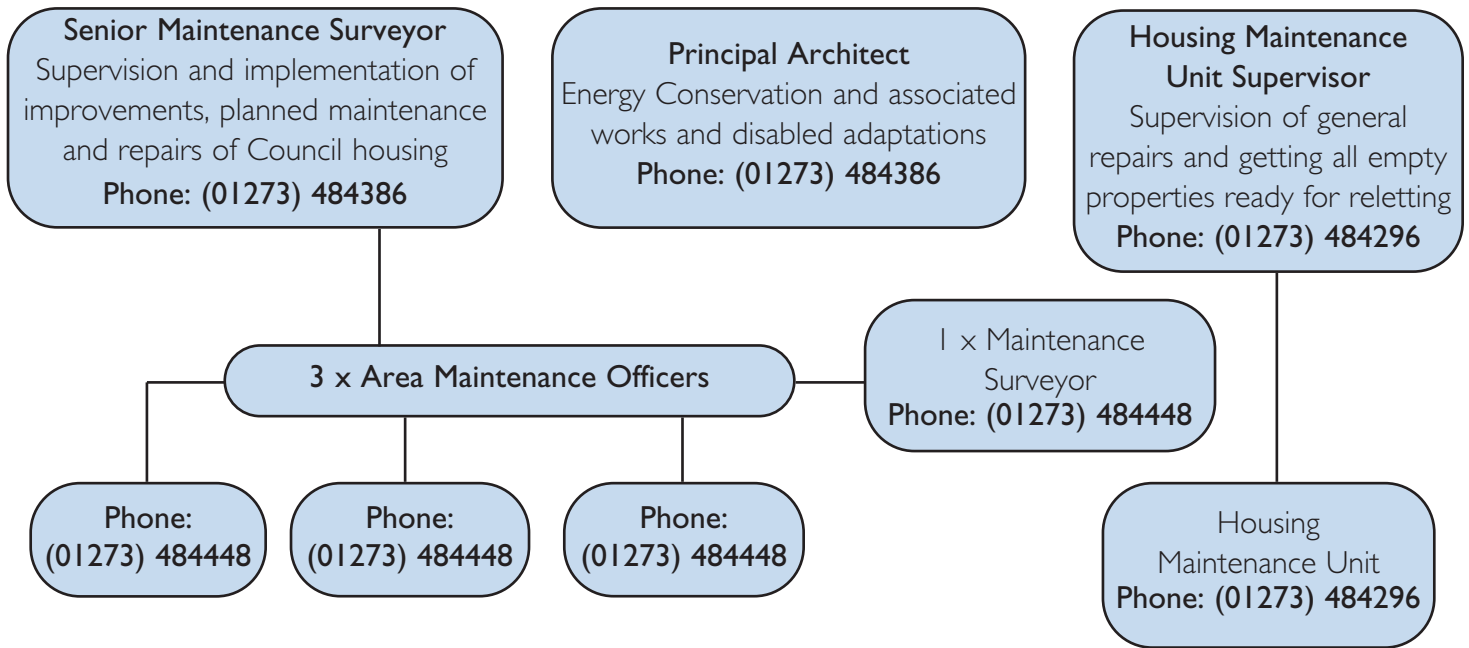
Lewes



Housing Maintenance Department

The Maintenance Department are responsible for all repairs. There is a team of Maintenance Officers who visit tenants to decide if and when a repair is to be carried out and arrange for empty properties to be ready for occupation, as well as architects who plan for extensions, disabled adaptations etc and the Council's own Building Maintenance Unit , who carry out some of the general repairs and get all empty properties ready for reletting.

The department also deals with all programmed home improvements, such as new kitchens, bathrooms, heating etc. This enables the Council to maintain properties to the Government's Decent Homes Standard.



If you would like more information on repairs please go to the Lewes District Council Guide to repairs at www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/propserv_factsheet_guide_to_repairs.pdf

Supported and Sheltered Housing Department

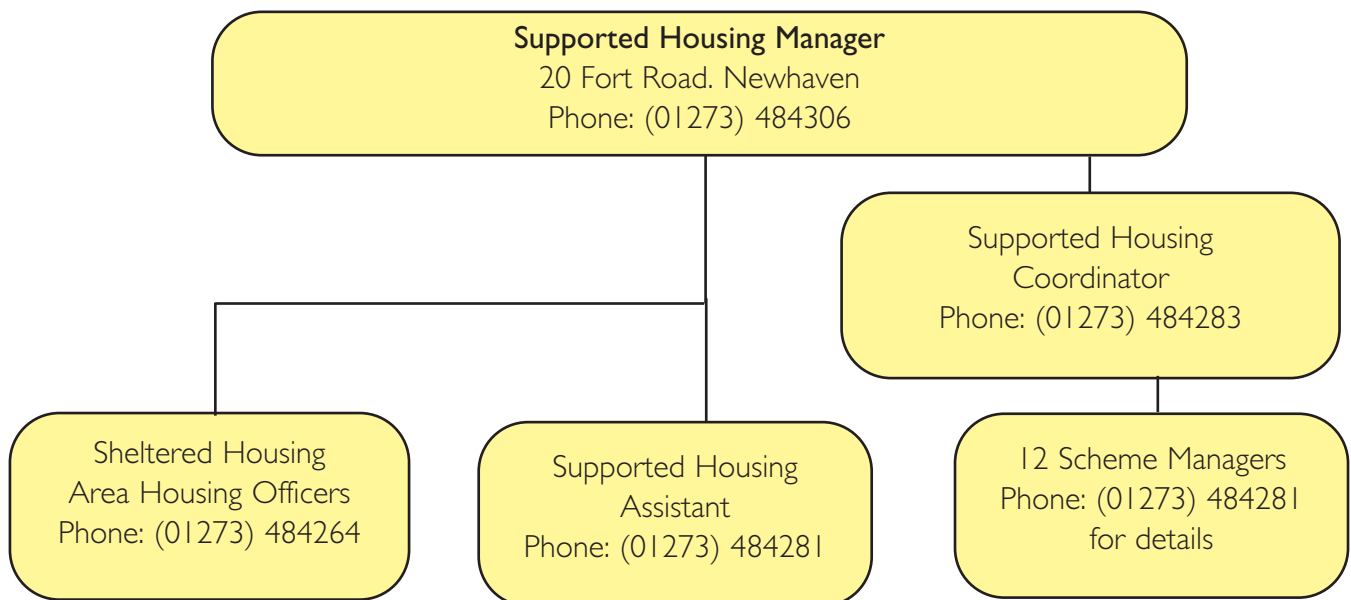
This department is responsible for Supported and Sheltered Housing in the Lewes District Council. Supported Housing is for people who are vulnerable and need support to live independently. Some support is 'floating' which means support can be provided wherever tenants live. Other support is in specialised supported housing such as sheltered accommodation which are either flats or bungalows which have been designed specifically for older people. Generally tenants are over 60. Each Sheltered Scheme is different, with its own individual characteristics, but all provide a Scheme Manager service. The role of the Scheme manager is to enable older people to:

- live as independently as possible in the community
- promote the physical and emotional well-being of tenants
- enable tenants to make choices about issues which directly affect them
- ensure help is available when needed
- assist tenants to access services
- provide support and personal contact
- encourage and enable social interaction within the scheme
- enable the establishment of a safe and secure environment.

Sheltered accommodation also includes a communal alarm system (WEL), which enables help to be summoned in an emergency.

Telephone: (01273 484306), Minicom: (01273) 484488

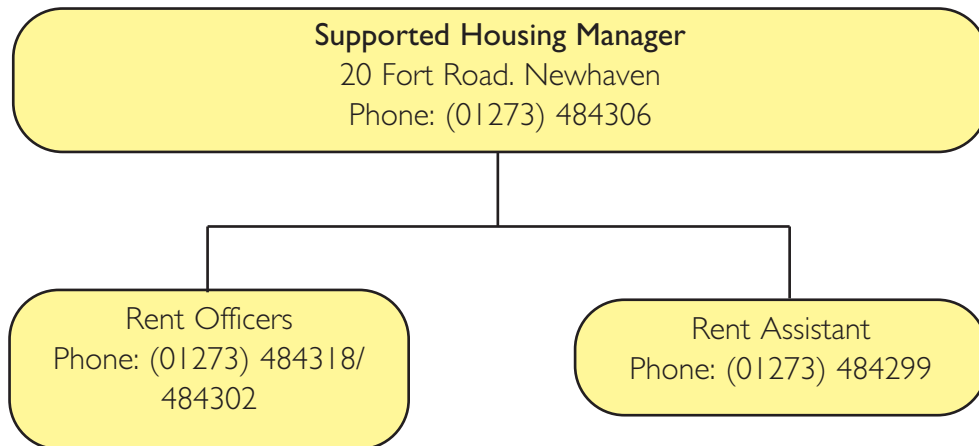
Email: shelteredhousing@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email)



There is a separate Sheltered Compact available. For a copy please contact the Tenant Participation Team on (01273) 487249/483185, email tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk (please remember to include a subject heading in your email) or go to www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/hsg_sheltcompact_08.pdf

Rent Department

The Rents Section is based at the Council Offices, 20 Fort Road in Newhaven and are responsible for the collection of rent arrears due to the Council for houses and garages owned by the Council. The rent officers also attend surgeries with the Area Housing Officers, if you would like details of the surgeries that run in the Lewes District Council area, please contact the Tenant Participation Team on 01273 487249/483185, or email tenant.participation@lewes.gov.uk



If you would like more details about Housing rent please go to www.lewes.gov.uk/housing/645.asp

Appendix 7

Registration form for the

Lewes District Tenants and Residents Involvement Pool

This is your chance to have your say and influence your housing services

Who can register?

- Any current Lewes District Council (LDC) tenant or leaseholder or member of their family living at the address.
- Any home owner or private tenant (including family members) living on LDC estates.

Why should you join the LDC Tenants and Residents Involvement Pool?

We need you to tell us your views on the housing services we provide. It is important that we are meeting your needs.

- You will be given the chance to give your views on issues that are important to your community.
- You will have the chance to make suggestions and put forward ideas for service improvements.
- You don't have to attend meetings if you don't want to.
- You can choose the ways you want to be involved and the issues you want to be involved in.

What will you be expected to do?

- Choose the services you wish to comment on.
- Choose how you wish to be involved. Maybe you would be willing to complete a survey, take part in a discussion group, take part in a conference or reply to e-mails. So if you don't want to go to regular meetings you can get involved in other ways.
- Give your views on existing housing services and priorities for improvements

How much time will you have to give?

It's up to you. You will be invited to participate in any activity that you have shown an interest in, but you are not obliged to take part. Help with travel and childcare costs will be available where appropriate.

So how do I join?

Just complete and return this form.



Please fill in one form per interested person – if you need extra copies contact 01273 487249.

Registration form for the

LEWES DISTRICT TENANTS AND RESIDENTS INVOLVEMENT POOL

Name

Address

Post code

E-mail address

Day time phone number

Mobile phone number

I would like to be involved in the following ways (tick all that apply)

Completing telephone/postal/face to face surveys Attending quarterly meetings of Tenants of Lewes District

Receiving & commenting on Proposals via e-mail Attending Community Forum meetings twice yearly

Attending regular working meetings Attending one-off focus group meetings

Attending conferences Becoming a Mystery Shopper

Joining my local tenants/residents association Receiving texts about housing services

I have an interest in (tick all that apply)

Repairs and improvements (inside your home) Production of Housing Link/ Tenants Voice

Environmental improvements Equalities policies (ensuring Services are accessible and fair to all)

Grass cutting/maintenance of Communal areas Monitoring Housing services

Caretaking/cleaning service How LDC involves tenants

Anti-social behaviour Leaseholder services

Budget and finance issues Sheltered housing service

Estate walkabouts Changes to tenancy agreement

Other (Please state)

To help us ensure that whenever possible all sections of the community are involved please can you give the following information

What is your age Under 16 16-24 25-34 35-44
45-54 55-64 65-74 75+

Which of the following best describes your ethnic origin?

a) White

British

Irish

Any other white background

b) Black and Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black Background

c) Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any Other Mixed Background

d) Asian and Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Any Other Asian Background

e) Chinese

f) Any other

Please specify

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes No

If yes please specify

Are you registered as disabled? Yes No

How do you describe yourself?

Council tenant Private tenant

Council leaseholder Home owner

Relative/lodger of any of the above

Once registered you will receive information and requests for your comments from time to time. For further information now, contact the Tenant Participation Workers on 01273-487249 or email Ruth.tahsin@lewes.gov.uk

Please fold and return to 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes BN7 2TA



This document can be made available in large print, on audiotape or disk,
or in another language upon request.

Please telephone 01273 484141 or email lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk



October 2009