

Tenant Participation Compact

December 2004

Revised June 2006



High Peak
Community Housing

Contents

Section	Page Number
Lilac Pages :	
Introduction	2
Background to the Tenant Participation Compact	3
Who to Contact for More Information	4
How to use this document	4
Blue pages :	
What can be expected from Meetings	5
Information Tenants Will Receive	7
Training Available to Tenants	8
Resources Dedicated to Effective Tenant Involvement	9
Expectations of Recognised Tenant & Resident Groups	10
Yellow pages :	
Housing Services - how each will consult and communicate with tenants/leaseholders	11
Green pages :	
Alternative Opportunities for Tenant Involvement	17
How the Compact will be checked and updated	19
How to make a complaint	20
Pink pages:	
Appendices:	
1. Code of Conduct for Tenants Meetings	21
2. Terms of Reference for Area Panels	23
3. Terms of Reference for Tenants Forum	25
4. Agenda Template for meetings	28
5. Expenses policy	29
6. Reporting Slip	31
7. Feedback Slip	32
8. Training Schedule	34
9. Jargon Buster / Glossary of Terms	36
10. Useful Contacts	41
Tenant Participation Structure	Back cover

Introduction

High Peak Community Housing has a clear commitment and dedication to tenant participation and this document aims to highlight how this works in practice.

This Tenant Participation Compact is simply an agreement between High Peak Community Housing and its tenants (* note any reference to tenants in this document also applies to leaseholders) which clarifies how tenants can, and will be involved at all levels in the decisions which are made about the Housing Service.

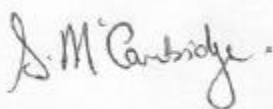
High Peak Community Housing is required by the Government to produce a Compact with its tenants, and is fully committed to doing so.

Tenants and members of staff of High Peak Community Housing have developed this document jointly to ensure that it meets everyone's needs and to make sure that the commitments made are realistic. This document will help to deliver an improved service and assist in providing the best home and environment possible for the tenants of High Peak Community Housing.

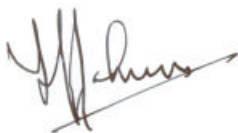
It is not anticipated that there will be any problems in delivering the commitments made in this agreement, but a system has been implemented for any tenant or member of staff to seek redress should they feel that this is not the case.



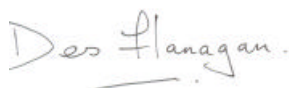
Walter Sutcliffe, Chair of Board



Sharon McCambridge, Chief Executive



Alan Johnson, Chair of Tenants' Forum



Des Flanagan, Vice Chair of Tenants' Forum



Roger Wilkinson, Board Tenant Champion

December 2004
(Revised June 2006)

Background to the Tenant Participation Compact

The first Tenant Participation Compact in High Peak was produced back in 2000. Following the handover of the management of the Housing Service from the Borough Council to the High Peak Community Housing ALMO in March 2004, it was agreed that the document would need to be reviewed and updated. This was needed in order to ensure that the needs and aspirations of tenants and the organisation were being met through the new structure.

A lot of activity has taken place to assess the views of a wide range of people, especially tenants about how they want to be involved in working with High Peak Community Housing to make sure a high quality and consistent service is being provided to tenants.

This work included:

- A postal survey of all tenants which attracted a 43% response rate
- A roadshow visited 15 locations around the area asking tenants how they wanted to be consulted and providing information about the major repairs and improvements to properties which will be carried out over the next few years
- Consultation with the existing Area Panels and Tenant Forum
- One off sessions with groups of staff
- Focus groups with a mixture of staff and tenants
- Discussions with the Board of management of High Peak Community Housing

Consultation with tenants across the borough will be ongoing and changes will be made to the Compact document on a regular basis. So, don't feel you've missed your chance – if you have an opinion or a suggestion or would simply like more information, just contact the resident involvement co-ordination team on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522.

The Board of High Peak Community Housing would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of the staff and tenants who have assisted in the development of this agreement. A lot of hard work has been done by a lot of different people and the production of this agreement would not have been possible without the help of those people. The Board recognises this hard work and would like to thank all of those who have contributed.

Who to contact for more information

If you are interested in becoming more involved with High Peak Community Housing all you need to do is either phone or e-mail the Resident Involvement Co-ordination team on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522 or getinvolved@hpch.co.uk

You may wish to become involved on a regular basis or just from time to time – either of which is fine! Simply give us a call and we will discuss the various options available to you.

For all housing enquiries call 0845 129 8075

To report a repair call 0845 129 8071

Textphone (for deaf or hard of hearing) 0845 129 4876

SMS Text messaging 07800 00 22 64

Website www.hpch.co.uk

E-mail enquiries@hpch.co.uk

How to use this document

The document is broken down into a number of smaller sections, each of which is clearly shown in the contents page. There are details about the different ways to become involved, how to get the most from meetings, the training available to support those who get involved and many more things. The sections are colour coded to make them easier to distinguish.

What can be expected from Meetings

In order to get the most from meetings, it is important that certain guidelines are in place. This helps the meeting to run effectively, giving everyone the opportunity to express their views, but without lasting for too long! High Peak Community Housing and the wide variety of tenants who helped to develop this agreement have therefore agreed the following standards that should be applied to all meetings organised by High Peak Community Housing or a recognised group of tenants.

Any attendee will treat others with respect and can expect to be treated with respect. Any code of conduct in place will be adhered to by all of those who attend the meeting. (Appendix 1 – Code of Conduct for Tenants Meeting, Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference for Area Panels, Appendix 3 Terms of Reference for Tenants' Forum).

All meetings should normally last no longer than 2 hours and all evening meetings should finish by 9pm (and certainly no later than 9.30pm).

All meetings should be chaired by an individual who has received training in how to chair meetings.* This will help the meeting to run to time, ensure that all items on the agenda are properly addressed and that everyone who wishes to speak will have the chance to do so.

Minutes of all meetings will be taken by someone who has been trained in how to take minutes.* As a result, everyone who attends will receive accurate details of the issues discussed at the meeting and the decisions that were taken.

There will be a set agenda for all Panel meetings. (Appendix 4 – agenda template for meetings shows standard items).

Minutes will be concise and will include action points, details of who is responsible for delivering on the action points, how, and by when.

Beverages will be provided at all meetings.

Light refreshments (such as sandwiches) will be provided at all meetings starting between 5pm and 6.30pm.

Travel expenses and caring expenses (child care or care of other direct relative) will be paid at the meeting or posted out after the meeting. (Appendix 5 – High Peak Community Housing Expenses Policy)

Any venue used for meetings will have full disabled access and facilities and those planning to attend will be informed of this prior to the meeting.

A hearing loop system can be made available at any venue.

Agendas and background information will be circulated to attendees at least 7 days in advance of the meeting.

Any guest (including a member of staff) who is invited to speak at a meeting will be given at least 14 days notice of the meeting and details of what is expected of them at the meeting.

14 days notice must also be given to any member of staff who is required to submit written information to support an item on the agenda.

Minutes will be produced and circulated within 2 weeks of any meeting along with an action plan detailing points raised at the meeting, the name of the member of staff dealing with the query and, where possible, the outcome.

Draft copies of the minutes and action plan will be proof read and agreed by the Chair of the meeting prior to sending to all members of the group.

At meetings such as Area Panels, where individual complaints should not be discussed, a member of staff will be available either before or after the meeting to deal with such issues and record the issue (Appendix 6 – Reporting Slip).

*To access training contact the Resident Involvement Co-ordination Team on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522.

The Information Tenants Will Receive

High Peak Community Housing recognise the fact that some tenants may choose not to be actively involved, as is their choice. However, it is also recognised that it is essential that all tenants receive key information regarding the Housing Service to ensure that they have equal opportunity to access any aspect of the service. High Peak Community Housing therefore commits to making a range of information available to tenants.

All information produced by High Peak Community Housing and circulated to tenants will be offered in large print, braille, tape, symbol and alternative languages.

Peak Performance magazine will be circulated to all tenants three times each year.

Rent letters will be sent out annually with quarterly rent statements.

Information on the performance of High Peak Community Housing will not simply be shown in percentages. Actual numbers and an explanation about what that means to tenants will also be included.

Area based performance information will be produced and circulated.

Tenants can submit articles for inclusion in Peak Performance magazine by contacting the Communications and Consultation Manager on 0845 129 8075 ext 6515.

Interested tenants can become part of a tenants communication panel to overview existing communication tools and discuss new ones by contacting the Communications Manager on 0845 129 8075 ext 6515.

Recognised Residents Associations will be offered the opportunity to submit articles to any edition of Peak Performance.

The High Peak Community Housing website will include the following information:

- Backdated copies of Peak Performance
- Details of the capital programme for major repair works
- Details of the performance of High Peak Community Housing on aspects of the Housing Management service
- Opportunities for tenants to become more involved

High Peak will provide notice boards in villages where they manage properties if a request is made. These boards will be used to display information about the Housing Service and opportunities for tenant involvement. Where Parish Council notice boards exist, the possibility of sharing a notice board will be explored first of all. The content of these boards will be co-ordinated by the Communications and Consultation Manager and delivered by the local Neighbourhood Co-ordinators.

Training available to Tenants

There are lots of opportunities for tenants to become involved in High Peak, and it is therefore important that they are offered any relevant training to help them to make an informed and effective contribution. High Peak Community Housing is therefore committed to providing regular training for both its staff and tenants. A dedicated annual budget for training has already been identified for training.

The following training will be offered and arranged by High Peak Community Housing, within the budget available (Appendix 8 – Training Schedule):

- Chairing Skills, Committee Skills and Minute Taking training will be offered on request to any tenant wishing to get more involved in a Resident Association or Area Panel, and to any member of staff attending meetings with tenants
- Minute taking training must be undertaken by any tenant or staff member responsible for taking minutes at a Resident Association or Area Panel
- Service specific training will be available to any tenant taking part in a Best Value Review group
- Action Planning training will be offered to all Resident Associations and Area Panels
- Any tenant who becomes a member of a project board for delivery of major works in an area will be offered training in contractor selection (this may be provided by a staff member of the project board)

Details of Training Courses available at Trafford Hall (www.traffordhall.com) will be available to all tenants where requested, requests to attend will be reviewed by the Tenants Forum.

Details of conferences will be publicised to all tenants and requests to attend will be reviewed by the Tenants Forum.

Any tenant attending a training event or conference will be expected to provide feedback to High Peak Community Housing or the group they represent. This will ensure that the information gained can be shared as widely as possible amongst other tenants and members of staff. The Resident Involvement Team will produce copies of any information gathered upon request.

Note...

Chairing Skills Training must be undertaken by any tenant or staff member responsible for chairing a Resident Association or Area Panel

Resources dedicated to effective Tenant Involvement

Tenant involvement is a core function for High Peak Community Housing. A dedicated budget has therefore been allocated specifically to deliver tenant involvement activities. Details of the budget for 2005/6 are shown below. However, the biggest resource dedicated to tenant involvement is the staff of High Peak Community Housing, all of whom are responsible for involving tenants at every opportunity with the aim of improving services.

There is a special budget for Tenant Participation. For 2006/2007 this is £136,000 and this includes:

- One full time Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator
- Panel Budget as allocated by the Area Panels (£35,000 in 2006)
- Grant funding for Resident Associations £2,000
- Youth Involvement £2,000
- Training and subscriptions £2,500
- Annual tenant conference £5,000
- Tenant Expenses & Attendance Allowances £11,000

High Peak is committed to reviewing the budget for Tenant Participation on an annual basis in consultation with the Tenants Forum. High Peak Community Housing will also work with the Tenant Forum to analyse both the costs and the benefits of any involvement mechanism used. This will ensure that the mechanisms used can both demonstrate value for money, and lead to service improvements.

Training for staff in tenant participation techniques is carried out on a regular basis as part of the commitment to ensure that all staff involve tenants in a positive way and at every opportunity.

A budget figure has also been set aside for a special effort to involve traditionally under represented groups such as those with disabilities, ethnic groups and young people.

The Resident Involvement Team will also work with groups of tenants who wish to attract external funding for particular projects. A large amount of external funding has already been secured, particularly by Gamesley Residents Association who will also provide advice and assistance to other groups.

Expectations of Recognised Tenant and Resident Groups

All recognised Tenant and Resident Groups receive an annual grant from High Peak Community Housing to assist them in providing a good service to local tenants. High Peak Community Housing therefore need to be sure that the groups are working effectively. Certain criteria has therefore been set which groups need to meet in order to be recognised by High Peak Community Housing. Support, training and assistance to achieve this will be offered by the Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator and by the appropriate Neighbourhood Co-ordinator. An existing group which fails to meet these standards will be given a period of six months, during which time additional support will be offered, to achieve the standards.

- Adopt a constitution which includes clearly stated aims and objectives, which clearly link to the work of High Peak Community Housing
- Cover a defined area which must include at least 50% of properties owned by High Peak Community Housing
- Have a Code of Conduct and / or Standing Orders to which all of the committee members are signed up to and abide by.
- Abide by the Equal Opportunities policy of High Peak Community Housing, a copy of which is available at each housing office
- Hold an annual general meeting at least every 15 months
- Invite members from the Tenant & Leaseholder Forum to the AGM
- Submit a copy of the Annual Accounts
- Have a committee made up of at least 50% tenants
- Hold at least 2 public meetings each year which are publicised in line with the details listed in the 'What can be expected from meetings' section of this document
- Make contact with all of its members using another mechanism (which could include surveys, newsletters, fun days, surgeries etc) on at least two occasions each year
- Submit quarterly reports to the local housing office outlining the main queries received*
- Send a representative to the relevant Area Panel and Tenant & Leaseholder Forum and provide feedback, ideally this should be a tenant if possible
- Actively encourage new members, especially those from traditionally under represented groups

*only applies to Residents Associations with their own premises

Any tenant or group of tenants interested in setting up a new group, or getting an existing group recognised by High Peak Community Housing, should contact the Resident Involvement Co-ordination team on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522.

Yellow

Housing Services

This section of the TP Compact looks at the various Housing Services provided by High Peak Community Housing and how tenants can presently become involved in each service area. There is also a reference to the planned future involvement of tenants in each of the services.

Estate Management

Involvement Type	Lead Member of staff or tenant	Which tenants are involved?	How are outcomes reported?	Timescale / frequency
Estate Walkabouts / Estate Inspections	Neighbourhood Co-ordinator	Open to all Tenant / Residents	The Area Panel representative gets a duplicate of the issues highlighted, and receives details of follow up action within 6 weeks	Quarterly or as requested
Area Wide Surveys	Communications and Consultation Manager	All or random sample	Detailed results are presented to the Tenants' Forum Results are also published in Peak Performance	Sample survey every year All tenants survey every 3 years
Local Surveys	Neighbourhood Co-ordinator or Senior Neighbourhood Co-ordinator	All tenants living in the defined area receive the survey	Tenants are provided with results and planned works by personal letter	As needed
Involvement Type	Lead Member of staff or tenant	Which tenants are involved?	How are outcomes reported?	Timescale / frequency

Peak Performance newsletter	Communications and Consultation Manager	All tenants receive a copy Peak Performance is an agenda item at Tenant Communications Forum Staff can submit articles	Tenants Forum Tenants Communications Forum	Three times per year
Consultation on Grounds Maintenance contract	Head of Operations	Grounds Maintenance Contract Monitoring group are consulted and monitor the level of service.	Board Annual Report Peak Performance	Monthly between April & October

Involvement : Housing Services Section
Last updated : June 2006

Yellow

Repairs and Maintenance

Involvement Type	Lead Member of staff or tenant	Which tenants are involved?	How are outcomes reported?	Timescale / frequency
Repair Satisfaction cards	Corporate Excellence Manager	Tenants who have a repair done can complete a satisfaction card	Reports of analysis are reported to the Consumer Panel, Tenants Forum and the board, and in the staff newsletter Certain cases will be followed up with the individual complainant	The week following the repair being reported
Repairs performance information	Head of Operations	Area Panel members receive area based performance information Forum & Consumer Panel	Organisation wide performance information about repairs is published in Peak Performance	In every edition – three times per year
Monitoring Panel	Head of Operations		Annual Report	Annually

Yellow

Involvement Type	Lead Member of staff or tenant	Which tenants are involved?	How are outcomes reported?	Timescale / frequency
Area Wide Surveys	Communications and Consultation Manager	All tenants receive Area Wide surveys	Detailed results are presented to the Tenants' Forum Results are also published in Peak Performance	Sample survey every year All tenants survey every 3 years
Focus Groups	Head of Operations & Corporate Excellence Manager	Tenants on the key players panel are invited to participate	Summary of outcomes sent to participants Information to board for discussion Report to Tenant Forum for information	During Best Value reviews
Roadshows at local events	Communications and Consultation Manager & Tenant Involvement Co-ordination team & Neighbourhood and Regeneration Manager	All tenants in the area notified	Article in Peak Performance & local newsletters	Ad hoc

Involvement : Repairs and Maintenance Section
Last updated : June 2006

Yellow

Tenancy, Rents, Voids and Allocations

Involvement Type	Lead Member of staff or tenant	Which tenants are involved?	How are outcomes reported?	Timescale / frequency
Changes to Tenancy Agreement or other major policy	Neighbourhood and Regeneration Manager	Letter to all tenants outlining changes and reason for them	Launch publicised in Peak Performance	When needed
Rent increase/decrease information	Chief Executive	All tenants receive a letter informing them of changes to their rent levels one month in advance	Not applicable	Annually
Rent statement information	Neighbourhood and Regeneration Manager	Letter to all tenant with current state of their rent account	Not applicable	Quarterly
Home visit	Neighbourhood Co-ordinator	All new tenants receive a home visit to ensure that they have no problems with repairs or rent	Not applicable	Within 1 month of moving in to their new property
Home visit	Neighbourhood Co-ordinator	Any tenant complaining that they are the victim of anti-social behaviour	Personal letter or visit to individual tenant who makes the complaint	As necessary

Involvement : Tenancy, Rents, Voids, Allocations Section
 Last updated : December 2004

Yellow

Yellow

Capital Programme and Major Works

Involvement Type	Lead Member of staff or tenant	Which tenants are involved?	How are outcomes reported?	Timescale / frequency
Pilot Project Teams for locally based improvement schemes	Surveyor	2-4 local tenants will sit on the project board & have a role in: selecting contractors and monitoring works	At meeting and in local newsletters	At key stages in the project
Local newsletters	Surveyor	All tenants receive newsletters including contact telephone numbers	Feedback to affected tenants & Project Team	At key stages throughout the project as agreed by the project team
Show houses on large schemes	Surveyor	All tenants affected are invited to the show home	In local newsletters (see above)	As necessary
Capital programme selection	Communications and Consultation Manager & Asset Manager	All tenants receive information about the capital programme and updates through Peak Performance	Updates are provided in Peak Performance	3 times a year

Involvement : Capital Programme and Major Works Section
 Last updated : December 2004

Alternative Opportunities for Tenant Involvement

High Peak Community Housing recognises that formal mechanisms and meetings do not appeal to everyone and is therefore committed to finding new ways to involve tenants and residents. We want to find ways which suit you best. Over the coming year we are committed to piloting the following types of involvement. We have no fixed view about where to pilot these mechanisms so if any tenant is interested in becoming more involved in one of the pilots, please contact the Resident Involvement Co-ordination Team on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522.

The Resident Involvement Co-ordination Team are in regular contact with the Youth Worker at High Peak Borough Council, and other agencies to ensure that tenants from traditionally under represented groups are given the opportunity to express their views, in a way with which they are comfortable and confident.

High Peak Community Housing is aware that there are many tenants living in villages where only a handful of properties are owned by High Peak Community Housing. We want to make sure that the voice of these tenants is still heard so we are interested in developing a network of **Village Voices**. These individuals, with the support of their neighbours, can be the primary contact person for their area between the tenants and High Peak staff.

We are also hoping to set up a Villages Forum for tenants living in isolated pockets of properties or rural locations. Items specific to these tenants will be discussed at the forum and if you would like to become involved please contact the Resident Involvement Co-ordination Team on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522.

A **Street Representative** scheme is also in operation, which works in a similar way to the village voices, but generally in an area where there is a larger number of properties managed by High Peak Community Housing. If a Residents Association is in operation, which covers the defined street, the street representative will report back to the group. If no group exists, they will report back to the local Neighbourhood Co-ordinator or Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator.

Often, housing issues arise in a local area where no recognised tenant group exists at present. In these instances, **individual tenants** will have the right to request that a member of staff attends a meeting with local tenants. This request must give the officer at least 2 weeks notice and must clearly state the need for the officer's attendance.

Estate inspections / walkabouts currently take place in some areas with representatives from the Neighbourhood. Ideally we would like to expand the number of people involved, so if you are interested in taking part, let us know!!

We also have a list of tenants who have said that they would like to become more involved. These people are now included on our **Key Players Panel** and we contact these individuals periodically to take part in one-off consultation exercises such as **Postal Surveys or Working Groups**. If you

would like to add your name to this database, just give us a call on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522.

We are also keen that tenants who live in sheltered housing are given the option to discuss issues of common interests. The **One Voice Panel** meets quarterly at different sheltered schemes, contact your scheme supervisor if you would like to attend.

Over the coming 12 months, we will be undertaking reviews of a number of services. As part of these reviews, we will set up **Review Groups**, made up of tenants and staff who will look at how the service works at present and how it can be improved in the future.

How the Compact will be checked and updated

It is essential that High Peak Community Housing regularly reviews its performance to ensure that things are working well and that the organisation is continually improving and providing value for money. The Compact, and tenant involvement in general is no exception to this.

High Peak Community Housing has therefore established a Compact Monitoring Panel consisting of five tenants from across the High Peak area, four members of staff and one board member. Two of the tenants on the Panel are members of the Tenants Forum, and three are members of the Key Players Panel.

This group has been established with the specific purpose of monitoring the Compact, and the performance of High Peak Community Housing in relation to the Compact, on a quarterly basis. The Performance Indicators listed in this document have been agreed by the Compact Monitoring Panel as have the targets for improvement.

The Resident Involvement / Communications Team at High Peak will provide the Panel with key information about performance in relation to tenant involvement on a quarterly basis. The Panel may request further information or details should they require it.

Panel members may also occasionally conduct reality checks to ensure that various mechanisms for are being carried out in line with the Compact. The Panel is tasked with ensuring that all staff are aware of the opportunities for tenant involvement and are actively promoting and encouraging involvement.

The Compact Monitoring Panel will report back to the Tenant Forum and the Board on a quarterly basis to outline its key findings. The Tenants Forum may then request that the Compact Monitoring Panel makes further investigations or enquiries.

The Compact Monitoring Panel will identify Performance Indicators and targets:

How to make a complaint

It is hoped that the Compact will be delivered effectively and that tenants will be satisfied that the commitments contained within the document have been met. However, High Peak Community Housing recognises the need for a system of redress in order that any tenant can complain should they feel that commitments contained within the Compact have not been adequately met.

Complaints about the Compact should initially be directed to the Resident Involvement Co-ordination Team either by telephone, visit or in writing. The complaint will then be logged and reported to the Compact Monitoring Panel who will complete an investigation and feedback to the complainant within 14 days. This feedback will outline the findings of the Panel and possibly a number of recommendations

If the complainant is not satisfied with this response, or if the recommendations are not implemented within the defined timescales, the complaint should then be referred back to the Resident Involvement Co-ordination Team who will convene a **Complaints Panel**. This Panel will consist of independent tenants, Board members and members of staff. The Panel will be established solely for the purpose of investigating the case/complaint. The Panel will review the case and make recommendations for an improvement in the situation.

In unresolved or serious cases an independent mediator will be hired to work with both parties to find a compromise with which all parties agree. The mediator will be chosen by both the landlord and the relevant tenant representatives.

Appendix 1

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TENANT MEETINGS

- ❑ Members of the group are expected to use appropriate behaviour during discussion and debate, which includes refraining from swearing, abusive, racist and offensive comments or remarks.
- ❑ Everyone shall be given an equal opportunity to participate.
- ❑ Everyone shall be asked to make their point clearly and concisely.
- ❑ Everyone shall respect each other's views.
- ❑ Only one person shall speak at any one time, and all other members shall listen to the speaker.
- ❑ Members will avoid the use of abbreviations and jargon – or define where necessary.
- ❑ Everyone shall speak clearly, at both a reasonable pace and volume.
- ❑ No smoking.
- ❑ Mobile Phones to be turned off or switched to silent during meetings, unless agreed with the Chair in advance.

Note:

If Members do not adhere to the above rules and persistently disrupt a meeting they may be asked to leave the meeting and/or be suspended indefinitely from the Panel.

It will be the responsibility of the Chair to control the meetings and deal with disruptive individuals as appropriate.

High Peak Community Housing

Tenant Compact

Code of Conduct - Complaints Procedure

If a complaint is made regarding the breaching of the code of conduct by any participant at a meeting covered by this Compact, the following process shall apply:

1. The complaint must be put in writing, and sent to High Peak Community Housing.
2. A letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint shall be sent to the person(s) complaining explaining how the complaint will be handled.
3. A letter shall be sent to the person(s) who are the subject of the complaint, outlining the details of the complaint made, asking for their comments, and outlining how the complaint will be handled.
4. A meeting shall be called, attended by the Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, the Board Champion for Tenant Participation and the Chair of the meeting concerned in the complaint.
5. This group shall consider the complaint and comments received.
6. The group shall consider whether the complaint is valid.
 - a. If they agree the complaint is valid they shall take the following action, depending on the severity of conduct:
 - i. decide that a further breach will result in the person in breach of the code of contact being banned from future meetings
 - ii. ban the person from future meetings as a result of this breach.
 - b. If they do not consider the complaint is valid, no action shall be taken.
7. Letters shall be sent to the person(s) complaining and the subject(s) of the complaint, explaining the outcome of their considerations.

Terms of reference for Area Panels

An Area Panel is a locally based consultation forum that has been set up to enable tenants and leaseholders to be involved at an area level in decisions about HPCH's local services.

The purpose of the Panel is to:

- provide a forum for consultation on housing management issues
- represent the views of tenants and leaseholders in respect of housing services
- advise HPCH's on expenditure priorities in the area
- monitor housing services provided to tenants and leaseholders
- recommend and monitor expenditure for local budgets and ensure financial control is maintained.
- participate in training and education programmes

Area panels:

- are consulted on policy reports before submission to HPCH Board
- allocate an agreed budget for environmental improvements each year. ensuring that the budget is not overspent and that feedback on each project funded is received
- take part in quarterly estate inspections, and encourage other tenants to take part
- suggest potential items for inclusion in Peak Performance magazine, and submit articles
- specify annually what they would like to see included in the Grounds Maintenance contract
- receive and review quarterly performance information on repairs and other services
- refer matters they believe to be of wider significance to the Tenants Forum but issues should be dealt with as far as possible at a local level and every attempt should be made to resolve issues at an area level.
- are to be chaired & meetings minuted by a tenant or leaseholder (not a Councillor or Board member) who has received appropriate training
- meet at least 3 times a year, 2 weeks before meetings of the Tenants Forum
- are serviced by a staff member from HPCH
- have a quorum of 5 members
- will have 5 clear days notice of meetings in writing and minutes and relevant papers will be circulated at least 5 days in advance of the meeting

Area Panels membership may include;

- any tenant or leaseholder living in that area
- any representative from a tenants or residents association in the area
- ward and town councillors for the area and tenant HPCH Board Members

Area Panel meetings will be publicised by staff and Panel members through:

- an advert on the High Peak website
- posters in all Housing Offices and Resident Association premises
- details in Peak Performance
- telephoning tenants and leafleting

Area Panel Members will:

- abide by an agreed Code of Conduct.
- declare any interest that may affect any comment on the matter under discussion.
- treat as confidential all matters relating to individual residents
- promote awareness of equal opportunities
- be reimbursed expenses(with receipts) including travel costs child care or other carer costs as appropriate
- liaise with tenants in villages where HPCH has notice boards to assess what information tenants would like to see displayed
- feedback to the Area Panel details of any course or conference attended and will share the information gained with other Panel members

Area Panel Business will;

- have standard agenda items on each Area Panel agenda. The Chair of any Area Panel will liaise with the appointed member of staff to agree the final agenda and may request the inclusion of additional items
- The Area Panels are responsible for providing HPCH with sufficient notice (in line with the standards agreed through the Compact) if they wish to invite guest speakers or members of staff to attend meetings
- HPCH will circulate the minutes from the Area Panel meetings

Those eligible to vote at panel meetings

All tenants and leaseholders present at the meeting are eligible to vote in the following ways:

- No more than two from any tenancy when show of hands
- Only one per vote per tenancy when ballot papers used

Terms of reference for the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum

The Tenants Forum is a consultation forum that has been set up to enable tenants and leaseholders to be involved at a district wide level in decisions about HPCH's services.

The purpose of the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum is to:

- provide a forum for consultation on housing management issues affecting all HPCH tenants and leaseholders
- represent the views of tenants and leaseholders in respect of housing services
- responsible for negotiating the budget for Tenant Participation on an annual basis
- monitor housing services provided to tenants and leaseholders.
- assess requests from tenants to attend external training courses and conferences
- promote the development of tenants groups and encourage more tenants to get involved
- promote equal opportunities, reach groups of tenants not currently involved and make its activities accessible to all tenants.

The Tenant and Leaseholder Forum will:

- receive information concerning the results of surveys conducted by HPCH. and may request further analysis or additional information
- receive feedback from the repairs satisfaction cards and will raise queries and challenges should poor performance be highlighted
- make decision with regard to the level of service to be included in the Grounds Maintenance contract following input from the Area Panels
- consider the recommendations from any focus groups held as part of Best Value reviews and will make recommendations for future action to HPCH Board
- will receive reports from the Compact monitoring Panel regarding performance in relation to the TP Compact and will make recommendations with regard to any major changes to HPCH Board
- will negotiate the targets and performance indicators in relation to Tenant Participation
- be consulted on policy reports before submission to HPCH Board
- consider matters referred by the Area Panels.
- be chaired & minuted by a tenant or leaseholder (not a Councillor or Board member) who has received appropriate training
- meet at least 3 times a year, 2 weeks after meetings of the Tenants Panels
- be serviced by a staff member from HPCH
- have a minimum of 5 members representing at least 2 Area Panels, including the Chair or Vice Chair.
- will have 5 clear days notice of meetings in writing and minutes and relevant papers will be circulated at least 5 days in advance of the meeting

Forum membership may include;

- 5 representatives from the North Area Panel
- 4 representatives from the Central Area Panel
- 4 representatives from the South Area Panel
- 1 representative from the Leaseholder Panel
- Each Resident Association recognised by HPCH will be able to send one representative

The following may also attend Forum meetings:

- Town councillors for the area and tenant HPCH Board Members, but have no voting rights unless elected as a Panel representative
- Any tenant or leaseholder may attend the meeting, but may not address the meeting.

Forum meetings will be publicised by staff and Forum members through:

- an advert on the High Peak website
- posters in all Housing Offices and Resident Association premises
- details in Peak Performance
- telephoning Area Panel representatives

Forum Members will:

- abide by an agreed Code of Conduct.
- declare any interest that may affect any comment on the matter under discussion.
- treat as confidential all matters relating to individual residents
- promote awareness of equal opportunities
- be reimbursed expenses(with receipts) including travel costs child care or other carer costs as appropriate
- feedback to the Tenants Forum details of any course or conference attended and will share the information gained with other Tenants Forum members
- provide HPCH with sufficient notice (in line with the standards agreed through the Compact) if they wish to invite guest speakers or members of staff to attend meetings

Forum Members will be disqualified from membership:

- they have failed to attend either scheduled Forum or Panel meeting for a continuous period of six months. Beginning with the date of the first meeting they failed to attend.
- In any period of 12 months a Forum member has been absent from either Forum or Panel meetings for at least 50% of Forum meetings.
- Is a Tenant Panel representative and no longer continues to be a Tenant.
- Is a Leaseholder representative and no longer continues to be a Leaseholder.

Forum Business will;

- be conducted at meetings of the Forum assisted by a committee elected annually from the Forum membership
- have standard agenda items. The Chair of any Tenants Forum will liaise with the appointed member of staff to agree the final agenda and may request the inclusion of additional items
- HPCH will circulate the minutes from the Tenants Forum meetings and publicise them on their web site

Election Process:

- One member from each area will step down annually, which means that the maximum time a representative from the North Area could serve before needing to be re-elected would be 5 years and 4 years in the South and Central areas.
- Elections will take place in September / October, through the Panels.
- Any prospective member to the Forum must have attended at least 2 Area Panel meetings in a year before a nomination can be accepted.
- In the event of a vacant position on the forum the area panel would be allowed to co-opt in between elections.

PANEL MEETING AGENDA

1. Code of Conduct
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting / matters arising / expressions of interest
4. Housing Matters
 - Capital programme
 - Repairs update (every other meeting)
 - Estate matters
 - Resident involvement
5. Panel Matters
 - Panel budget
 - Feedback from Forum representative
 - Resident Association Feedback (where relevant)
 - Issues for future meetings
 - Grounds Maintenance Monitoring
6. Non Housing Issues
7. Any other business
8. Date of next meeting

TENANT PARTICIPATION – EXPENSES POLICY

Introduction

1. High Peak Community Housing seeks to encourage all tenants to participate in activities that improve our services. We will provide necessary training to enable tenants to participate effectively. We will also provide attendance allowances, cover recognised out of pocket expenses and refreshments, as appropriate. Allowances and expenses can be claimed by the tenant and or partner / representative (if living at the same address as the tenant)

Panel Meetings, Focus Groups, Workshops and Monitoring Groups

2. All expenses and allowances must be claimed by submitting an expense claim form. These will be posted with the agenda or available at the meeting. All expenses will usually be paid by cheque.

Expenses

3. Public Transport

Tenants are encouraged to use all forms of public transport where possible. Public transport expenses will be reimbursed upon production of a receipt or ticket.

4. Taxis

Taxi expenses are not covered by this policy. Please speak to the Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator regarding travelling by taxi.

5. Mileage

Tenants are encouraged to car share where possible. Mileage will be paid at the current casual users rate for a 1000cc engine. An additional allowance of 2 pence per mile can be claimed per passenger attending the same meeting.

6. Car Parking

Car parking costs will be reimbursed on production of the parking receipt. This excludes parking penalties.

7. Care Costs

*Care Costs, some tenants may have difficulties attending meetings or events due to care responsibilities. This may be, for example, of a younger child or older relative. Where this is the case, tenants can claim a contribution towards care costs if attending a meeting. An allowance of £5.00 per hour can be claimed up to a total of 3hrs (£15.00) towards care costs. Please speak to your Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator for help in clarifying who would be eligible to be covered by care costs.

*** This contribution is designed to encourage those tenants who without such financial assistance – would not otherwise be able to participate.**

8. Telephone Calls

Telephone calls will not be reimbursed. If it is anticipated that where a telephone call will take time or be expensive then it is advised that you ask the person that you are calling to call you back.

9. Subsistence Allowance

On rare occasions tenants may be asked to attend events where food and drink are not provided. When this is the case tenants are entitled to a contribution towards any subsistence costs. Subsistence contributions are £5.00 per half day (4hours) and £10.00 per full day (8hours).

10. Other Expenses

There may be occasions when other expenses may be incurred. Please contact your Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator before purchasing anything that is **not** covered by this document.

Attendance Allowance

11. Tenants are entitled to claim a £5.00 attendance allowance when attending meetings arranged by HPCH. The attendance allowance will only be paid where claimed. No allowance will be paid when attending HPCH Tenant Conference, training events and events organised by other agencies. Please contact the Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator for clarification. All attendance allowances payments will be in vouchers.

Review of policy, attendance allowance & expenses

12. The policy and the amount of payments and grants will be reviewed each year as part of the Tenant Compact review.
13. From April 2006-March 2007 the payment levels shall be:
 - 13.1 Area Panel, focus groups, workshops, monitoring groups, etc - £5 attendance allowance and mileage 42.0p plus 2p per passenger, per mile.
 - 13.2 Room hire & refreshments to be organised by HPCH.
 - 13.3 No travel expenses payable when HPCH have provided transport.

Appendix 6

REPORTING SLIP – TENANT MEETINGS

Name

Address

Telephone number

Query

Date of meeting

Received by

Acknowledgment Required

yes

no

by phone

by post

Reporting slip Section
Last updated : June 2006

Pink

TENANT PANEL MEETING FEEDBACK SHEET

Which part of the meeting did you find **MOST**:

enjoyable?.....
.....
useful?.....
.....
interesting?.....
.....

Which part of the meeting did you find **LEAST**:

enjoyable?.....
.....
useful?.....
.....
interesting?.....
.....

Do you feel that you were given enough information?:
yes.....no.....

If you answered **no**, what further information would you like?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

If you were organising the meeting, is there anything that you would change?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Are there any issues that you would like to be discussed at future meetings?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Would you like to attend training sessions?
yes.....no.....

If you have answered **yes** what courses would you like?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Any other comments?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

MEETING

VENUE.....

DATE.....

Please return to:

**Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator
Municipal Buildings
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 8AF**

Appendix 8

TENANTS TRAINING PLAN 2006-2007

Aim

To ensure tenants have access to training opportunities to enhance their role in participating in High Peak Community Housing, specifically:

- running and taking part in effective participation groups and forums
- technical skills for developing, monitoring and evaluating services
- project planning and consultation techniques for involving others.

Training is available on a variety of subjects for tenants and will give individuals and groups the skills and knowledge to work effectively within their local community. Training is free of charge and reasonable travel costs will be paid. Each year we review our training programme to make sure it provides the skills to allow tenants to be effectively involved.

As well as organising group training, the Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator can also offer one-to-one training for new tenant representatives. External training may be appropriate at times to meet specific training needs.

A rolling training programme is organised each year consisting of the following short courses:

Tenant Involvement

This course provides knowledge and insight into the levels of Tenant Participation at HPCH and how groups / individuals can get involved, it also gives an insight into the national picture.

Tenant Participation Compact

This course takes a look at what compacts are and what they can achieve.

Departments & Roles

This course looks at who does what in High Peak Community Housing, and the role of Councillors. It also looks at tenant involvement and an A-Z of services provided by us and other agencies.

Presentation Skills

Feeling nervous about speaking at meetings? Want to know how to put your views well at meetings? This course will help overcome these demons

Committee Skills

This course will provide practical help in working together, compromising and negotiating to make decisions and getting the best from team members. It also looks at the skills of the Chair, Secretary & Treasurer.

Anti Social Behaviour & Neighbour Nuisance

This course looks at what is anti social behaviour & what is neighbour

nuisance, and the roles High Peak Community Housing, tenants and other agencies have.

Allocations & Applications

This course looks at the demand for social housing, how properties are let and good practice of other housing providers.

Rents & Arrears

This course looks at how rents are set and an overview of the rent arrears recovery policy.

Supported Housing & Supporting People

This course looks at the role of Supported Housing and Care Link.

Equalities & Diversity

This course will give tenant representatives the knowledge and skills required to ensure equality of opportunity within a group and challenge any unacceptable behaviour within the community. Those attending the course will finish the course celebrating diversity and understanding of discrimination.

Involving Under 30s

This course will help assess why it has been difficult to involve the under 30s.

Recruitment & Selection

This course will give an introduction into the selection and recruitment process and also outline the importance of tenant involvement in the process.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Where practical tenants will be offered the opportunity to attend joint training with staff and board members.

Tenants are also offered the opportunity to attend training courses at Trafford Hall (Tenant Resource Centre) contact Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator for more information.

Derbyshire Tenants Network and PEP also offer conferences and short training courses and again the Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator will have details.

To access training contact the Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator on 0845 129 8075 ext 6522

Appendix 9

Jargon Buster / Glossary of Terms

AGM – Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting is held by an organisation at about the same time every year. At the meeting the committee report on the organisation's work over the last year and present the accounts to the organisation's members. A new committee is also selected at the AGM.

ALMO – Arms Length Management Organisation

A company set up by a local authority or one in which a local authority has a majority share, which manages council owned housing. The council retains ownership of the properties.

Best Value

'A duty to deliver services to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic, efficient and effective means available' (ODPM definition).

Board of Management

A group of people who have volunteered or been elected to control the affairs of a Housing Association or ALMO.

Board Member

The term used to refer to a member of the Board of Management.

Budget

The amount of money an organisation estimates it will spend over a certain time period, usually a year.

Capital Programme

A plan, usually over at least one year, for building and improving housing.

Code of Conduct

Is a set of guidelines that describe how members of a committee or group are expected to carry out their duties and conduct themselves when at meetings, or when acting on behalf of their organisation.

Communications Panel

Reviews our newsletter, conference, publications, website, etc

Constitution

Is a document, produced by a group that states its aims, objectives, membership, rules etc. It is essential that a group has a good constitution as it is the document that should be referred to if any problems arise about the way in which the group is run.

Consumer Panel

Reviews customer feedback from surveys and comment forms and suggests ways to improve services.

Decent Homes Standard

Is a target set by the Government for all social housing providers to meet set standards of fitness and design for their homes by 2010.

Disability Panel

The Disability Panel is made up of tenants with disabilities. Individual members take part in consultation exercises to ensure that the views and needs of disabled tenants are addressed.

Equal Opportunities

This means treating all people equally, and not being prejudiced or discriminating against someone because of their ethnic origin, religion, sexuality, disability, gender or age. Groups should adopt an **Equal Opportunities Policy** that sets out their commitment to equal opportunities and what someone can do if they feel that they have been discriminated against.

Focus Group

Draws people together for a discussion on a specific topic and aims to find out what people think, feel, believe and their reasons for doing so. Focus groups do not have to reach any agreement.

Grounds Maintenance Monitoring Panel

Monitors how well the communal grassed areas and landscaped areas are being maintained.

Housing Inspectorate

Under the Best Value regime, all local authority (including ALMOs) housing services will be inspected to check that they are showing continuous improvement, and providing value for money. These inspections are carried out by the Housing Inspectorate.

Key Players Panel

A database of tenants available for helping with postal surveys, focus groups, telephone surveys etc.

Leaseholder

Is a person who does not own the land that their home is built on and pays a ground rent for a fixed number of years. Tenants who live in flats and buy them from their landlord are called leaseholders.

Major Repairs

Improvements to housing stock that are too substantial to be covered by normal allowances for repairs and maintenance work.

Monitoring

The checking of a system or process to make sure it is working properly and achieving its goals.

Neighbourhood Plans

A document showing how we intend to tackle key issues and make improvements in the areas in which we have properties. These plans are developed in consultation with our residents and reviewed on a regular basis.

ODPM

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The part of the Government responsible for Housing.

One Voice Panel

The one voice panel is for all tenants in sheltered accommodation. It meets quarterly at different sheltered sites and considers issues of common interest.

Performance Indicators

Are details which show how effectively a landlord is managing its services and properties. Performance Indicators are a requirement of all local authorities (and ALMOs) set by the Government. In addition to the national indicators set by the Government, each organisation is required to produce its own local indicators

Recognition Criteria

Set out what a residents association must do in order to be 'recognised' by the landlord as the official group for their area. A recognised group can receive funding, resources and support from their landlord.

Repairs

Mending something that is broken, inside or outside your home. A tenant should refer to their tenancy agreement to see whether they, or their landlord, is responsible for carrying out a particular repair.

Rent

Money paid to a landlord by a tenant in exchange for occupying a property.

Rent Arrears

If you fall behind with your rent payments (whether paid by Housing Benefit or not), you are said to be in rent arrears. This means that you owe your landlord money.

Resident Association (also known as Tenant Associations, Tenant and Leaseholder Association etc)

A voluntary group made up of people who live in a particular area or scheme, who have got together to have their say on local issues and to improve their area. A committee of a resident association is usually elected each year at an AGM.

Street Representatives

A street representative is an individual who liaises with the landlord to represent the views of tenants on their street.

Tenant

Is a person who agrees to occupy a property owned by someone else in exchange for payment (rent).

Tenant Consultation

'A council must inform tenants of its proposals, it must give tenants the right to comment, and it must give consideration to tenants' comments before it takes a decision' – Housing Act 1985.

Tenant Participation

Is a two way process involving the sharing of information and ideas, where tenants are able to influence decisions and take part in what is happening.

Tenant Participation Compacts

Are 'locally negotiated agreements between a landlord or its managing agent and its tenants, setting out how tenants will be involved collectively in taking local decisions on housing issues which affect them' – ODPM.

Tenant's Handbook

Is a handbook containing useful information about the tenancy and the landlord, given to new tenants by the landlord.

Village Voice

Is an individual based within a village who represents the views of the tenants to the landlord.

Voids

Empty homes, usually waiting for some repairs or improvements to be done or for a new tenant to move in.

Appendix 10 Useful contacts

TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service)

5th floor, Trafford House
Chester Road
Manchester
M32 0RS

Freephone enquiry line for all tenants: 0500 844111

www.tpas.org.uk

info@tpas.org.uk

Fax: 0161 8776256

Trafford Hall (National Tenants Resource Centre)

Ince Lane
Trafford Wimbolds
Nr Chester
CH2 4JP

Tel: 01244 300246

Fax: 01244 300818

PEP North (Priority Estates Projects)

3rd floor, City Point
710 Chester Road
Manchester
M32 0RW

www.pep.org.uk

info@pep.org.uk

ODPM (Tenant Services Branch)

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Zone 1/H6
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0207 944 3488

Fax: 0207 944 3489

CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing)

Octavia House, Westwood Way
Coventry
CV4 8JP

Tel: 02476 851700

Fax: 02476 695110

www.cih.org

TAROE (Tenants and Residents Organisation of England)

41 Estate Buildings
Railway Street
Huddersfield
HD1 1JY

High Peak Tenants' Forum

c/o HPCH Tenant Involvement Co-ordination Team

High Peak Area Panels

c/o HPCH Tenant Involvement Co-ordination Team

Gamesley Residents Association

30 Winster Mews
Gamesley
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 0LU

01457 857770

Residents of Fairfield Association

133 Victoria Park Road
Fairfield
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 7PE

01298 73904

Derbyshire Tenant Network

Care of HPCH Tenant Involvement Co-ordination Team

Useful Documents

Tenants handbook

(If you do not currently have a copy of the Tenant Handbook, you can order a replacement by contacting 0845 129 8075).

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High Peak Community Housing – Tenant Participation Structure

