

CABINET

9 JULY 2008

TENANT PARTICIPATION COMPACT

REPORT OF HEAD OF LANDLORD SERVICES

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RECENT REFERENCES:

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2008 Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Council's Tenant Participation Compact is a locally negotiated binding agreement between the Council as landlord and its tenants and leaseholders, setting out how they can participate in decisions that affect their homes and community. All social landlords are expected to agree and publish such agreements and Government see them as a key driver in ensuring that tenants have every opportunity to shape the services that are funded from Housing rents.

The existing Compact is highlighted by a national tenant support organisation as an example of good practice. This report recommends a new Compact based very much on the previous model, but updated to reflect current business plan priorities and tenant aspirations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet endorse the proposed Compact, subject to minor editing changes to be approved by the Head of Landlord Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Chairs of TACT.

CABINET9 JULY 2008TENANT COMPACT 2008-2010REPORT OF HEAD OF LANDLORD SERVICESDETAIL:1 Introduction – What is a Compact?

1.1 Tenant Participation Compacts are locally negotiated binding agreements between the Council as landlord and its tenants and leaseholders, setting out how they can participate in decisions that affect their homes and community. Agreeing local compacts or participation agreements with tenants is a key Government expectation on all social landlords. The Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry on Resident Involvement, against which they assess any landlord organisation delivering excellent service would:

- *Have a well established, effective and comprehensive compact and/ or resident involvement statement, which exceeds basic DCLG requirements. The compact/ involvement statement is up to date and relevant.*
- *Have a range of mechanisms in place that allow service users to participate effectively, in a way and level that suits them, in the design, management and performance of housing services.*
- *Treat resident involvement as an integrated and important element of the service, designed for the convenience of the service user and not the organisation*

1.2 Winchester City Council's Compact covers the overall approach to tenant involvement in the Winchester District. It lays down expected standards, levels of service for working together and plans to increase the opportunities and options for involvement by encouraging both individual and collective participation.

1.3 Its overriding aim is to minimise barriers to involvement at all levels thereby benefiting tenants, leaseholders and the City Council.

1.4 The signing of the district-wide Tenant Participation Compact in September 2000 marked the beginning of a new partnership between tenants, elected members and staff. This document was updated in 2004 and now requires further updating to reflect current initiatives, targets and future plans aimed at meeting tenant aspirations.

1.5 The 2004 Compact has been cited by TPAS, a national advisory service for tenants, as one of two examples of positive practice. The 2008 Compact seeks to maintain this positive approach.

2 Progress made against the Compact & the Action Plan

2.1 Since the signing of the current Compact in September 2004 steady progress has been made on the action plan contained within the Compact.

2.2 Compact actions that have been progressed and have or are currently supporting the improvement of Landlord Services include:

- TACT attendance at Cabinet, comments on all housing reports and cooption onto the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel.
- Tenant Talk, an initiative aimed at reaching those tenants unable or unwilling to attend formal meetings which has attracted over 100 more tenants to get involved in some way.
- Organising a Sheltered Housing Forum and information sharing sessions at sheltered schemes.
- Establishing local surgeries, an initiative which has now developed into the local access point project.
- Setting up new forums for leaseholders and to review the management of void properties and estate issues generally.
- TACT web pages have been established linked to the Council's main website.

3 The 2008 Tenant Compact

- 3.1 The existing compact has been reviewed by a small group of officers, members and tenants who have monitored progress with the actions included within the Compact. Very few changes have been recommended, although wording will be amended to reflect the current Council priorities in relation to Customer Service and Equal Access to Services.
- 3.2 One change that is proposed in the production of the new compact is a move away from a "glossy" publication towards a simple A4 signed statement. It will be necessary for a very short summary to be produced for all tenants, as the Council is obliged to test tenant satisfaction with the actual compact every two years. However, this can be incorporated into the tenants' magazine and production costs will be reduced significantly by the proposed approach compared to 2004.
- 3.3 The draft Tenant Participation Compact 2008-2010 is appended to this report. It is recommended that the Head of Landlord Services be given authority to agree minor editing changes in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and TACT Chairs, prior to formally signing the agreement.
- 3.4 Whilst the proposed Compact makes no significant changes to the current document, the signing of the new agreement provides the opportunity for both the Council and tenants to demonstrate their commitment to effective resident involvement.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

4 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 4.1 Customer focus is a basic principle of the Corporate Strategy and is inextricably linked to Best Value.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Resources required to deliver actions detailed in the Compact have been included in the Tenant Involvement budget for the current year. No separate budget provision

for publicising the Compact has been included and promotion will be incorporated into the "On the House" magazine in October.

6 TACT COMMENT

- 6.1 TACT have been fully represented on the Working Group that has been responsible for drafting the revised Compact and are fully supportive of the proposed approach.
- 6.2 TACT sees the Compact as a very important commitment from all involved which demonstrates the importance placed by the Council and by TACT of working together to improve services and value for money. It is crucial that we both maintain this commitment to tenant participation to ensure all tenants know we are working hard to meet their aspirations, one of which is to retain the Council as our landlord, so the partnership can continue into the future years ahead.

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 - Tenant Participation Compact

Due to its size, the Appendix is attached for Members of Cabinet, Group Leaders, TACT representatives, Chairman of Principal Scrutiny Committee and of Social Issues Scrutiny Panel only. A copy is available in the Members' Library and on the Council's Website via the following link:

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/ElectedRepresentatives/Committees/CommitteeMeeting.asp?id= SX9452-A783CDE1&committee=780>



Workingtogether

The Tenant Participation Compact

2008 - 2010

Endorsement

We are pleased to endorse this updated copy of Winchester City Council's district wide Tenant Participation Compact, (herein known as an Agreement) which demonstrates our commitment to working more closely with our tenants and leaseholders.

The aim of the Agreement is to give you a greater say in the way Housing services are delivered and new opportunities for involvement. You will find in this Agreement an Action Plan showing you how we plan to improve tenant involvement, and a list of ways in which you can become involved. We have also given you an indication of the level of involvement and a star rating to guide you on your time commitment of how you wish to be involved.

This Agreement is a constantly evolving document and will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is kept up to date and continues to deliver the level of involvement that you want.

This Agreement has been formally agreed by elected members of the City Council.

Our thanks go to the enthusiastic and dedicated tenants, elected members, and staff whose efforts have produced this Agreement.

Insert Signatures

Richard Botham
Head of Landlord Services

Beryl White
Chair of TACT
Afternoon Group

Alan Rickman
Chair of TACT Evening Group

Cllr Tony Coates
Portfolio Holder for
Housing

Acknowledgments

This Agreement acknowledges and recognizes the unpaid efforts of TACT and other tenants who have spent many hours working on its review for the benefit of all tenants throughout the district.

Name of tenant

Chris Barton-Briddon
Janet Berry
David Cruden
Brian Hayes
Alan Rickman

Area

Otterbourne
Highcliffe
West Meon
Compton
Weeke

Supported by:

Glynis Cole
David Lumby
Councillor Ian Tait
Councillor Tony Coates

Tenant Involvement Manager
Tenant Participation Officer
Chairman of Social Issues Scrutiny Panel
Portfolio Holder for Housing

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Our Vision

A partnership of equals between tenants and the Council that delivers an excellent service which is responsive to tenants' needs, with an emphasis on achieving value for money and a customer service we are proud of.

Customer Care Standards

Everything we do is delivered through a set of standards which are shared by all members and staff:

We pledge to:

- Ask for your views
- Listen to what you say
- Provide good quality services
- Give you value for money
- Work together

In meeting these pledges, The Council promise to:

- Be honest and open
- Deal with your enquiries quickly, sympathetically and effectively
- Be responsive to your needs
- Take a pride in our work and in the district we serve
- Treat you with care and respect
- Use your money carefully
- Treat everyone fairly
- Try to do a good job

What is this Agreement?

This document is an Agreement between Winchester City Council and its tenants. It explains how the Council and tenants are working together to ensure that tenants are involved in decisions affecting their homes and communities and how tenants can become involved. It sets out standards for ways of working together.

In this document 'tenants' means tenants and leaseholders, 'the Council' means councillors and staff. Other terms used in this document are explained in the Jargon Buster at the end.

This Agreement is a working document which will be reviewed annually by the Tenant Participation Compact Monitoring Group.

What will the Agreement achieve?

The Agreement is designed to ensure that the Council becomes more answerable to tenants, by letting them know who is responsible for decisions and how those decisions are made. Tenants are being invited to get involved in housing matters and to tell us their areas of concern. The Council and tenants will work together to look at ways of measuring success, and find areas where performance can be improved.

What has the Agreement achieved?

The Agreement has achieved real success in improving Tenant Involvement throughout the Winchester district and has received national recognition for good practice from TPAS (The Tenant Participation Advisory Service) a national organization dedicated to tenant involvement.

These include:

- Extra influence in the decision making process with formal tenant representation on all council committees and meetings that discuss, approve, and scrutinize housing related issues. Their role at these meetings is to present the interests and views of all tenants.
- Opportunities through partnership working with a group of local authorities and housing associations that work together to provide cost effective training for tenants.
- Regular meetings with the Portfolio Holder for Housing to discuss current housing issues.
- Involvement in monitoring the Tenant Involvement Budget, which is presented to TACT annually.
- Dedicated IT equipment and support including the use of a laptop and printer and internet access for the TACT Chairmen.
- A Leaseholder Forum giving leaseholders the opportunity to influence their service.
- The creation of a Housing Management Forum (an amalgamation of The Rents and Business and Voids and Allocation Forum) to look at ways of developing, improving and monitoring the Housing Management service.
- The setting up of Information Sharing Sessions in our Sheltered Schemes enabling residents to get involved and improve their sheltered scheme service.
- Consultation on the development of Housing Revenue Account land through TACT and Tenants Associations.
- The setting up of TACT and Tenants and Residents' Association web pages to publicise, encourage and improve tenant involvement, making the information more accessible.
- Review of the Council's newsletter for tenants and their families resulting in a new image, size and improved content produced by a partnership of tenants, officers and councillors.

- The formulation of a Tenant Talk register giving tenants throughout the district an opportunity to choose the services they wish to comment on in the way they would like to be involved.
- The opportunity for Winchester City Council, TACT and tenants district wide to participate in tenant involvement nationally, through TPAS area committees.
- Involvement in a Tenant Inspection Group, a partnership of local authorities and housing associations offering tenants the opportunity to examine, question, compare and highlight good practice and suggest improvements to Housing Services provided by their landlord.

For details of improvements to Tenant Involvement planned for the coming year, please see the Agreement Action Plan on page 23.

Making the Agreement work

A. The role of tenants

Tenants acknowledge their responsibility in playing their part in the Agreement, which is for the mutual benefit of the Council and all tenants. Tenants will work towards the success of the Agreement by:

- Abiding by their Tenancy Conditions with particular reference to The Tenants Responsibility which can be found in the Tenants Handbook.
- Reading the Tenants Handbook and making use of the information contained in it to help resolve problems arising on our estate or in our homes.
- Respecting the Council in the performance of its duties.
- Co-operating with and respecting the Council's contractors who work on the Council's behalf for our mutual benefit.

In addition to the above points every tenant has the right to:

- Access relevant papers or background information (excluding those of a confidential nature), in order to make an informed decision on services provided for them.
- Be involved in the decision-making process concerning Housing Services, working in partnership with the Council.
- Decide on what level or stage to be involved and the level of responsibility they wish to take.
- Have their views recorded to reflect a true, accurate measure of their needs and to ensure there are no misunderstandings.
- Indicate at what level, stage, or by what method they wish to be consulted or involved.
- Establish a tenants' and residents' group.

For further information on how you can become more involved, at what level and the

time commitment see 'Options for Involvement' on page 8. If you would like further information on tenant involvement, TACT or Tenants and Residents Associations and other organisations, or would like to contact the Tenant Participation Team, see 'Contacts and Further Information' on page 17, or go to the TACT and Tenant and Residents Association web pages on www.winchester.gov.uk/TACT.

Remember that tenants have statutory and legal rights - one of the most important is the right to be consulted.

B. Tenant Involvement

There are lots of ways and opportunities to become involved, from sharing views and information to meeting other tenants, attending focus groups, or going to Council committee meetings. These are shown below with an indication of the level of involvement and a star rating to guide you on the time commitment.

Tenants have extra influence as a direct result of the Agreement. TACT has formal representation on all council committees and meetings that discuss, approve, and scrutinise housing related issues. TACT's role at these meetings is to represent the interests and views of all tenants.

TACT also:

- writes and presents their own reports,
- are invited to be involved in 'task and finish groups', and informal and formal working parties organised by the Council, to discuss housing issues in more depth.

The Council and tenants support the principles of developing tenant involvement and consultation in ways that meet the needs of individual tenants and groups. This is consistent with Government expectations.

Tenant Talk

Tenant Talk is designed to encourage wider involvement and to give you a more flexible way to give your views on the services that interest you. It is tailor made to suit your home commitments and the time you have to spare.

So if you find meetings dull, or difficult to get to, you can get involved in other ways – the choice is yours.

Work will continue to look at new opportunities, taking into account any costs, to ensure that proposals are appropriate to the resources available. An action plan has been put together to develop and improve tenant involvement in line with Continuous Performance Assessment and the principle of continuous improvement.

C. Options for Involvement

The options	Star rating	Level of involvement
Conferences and training events	*	Information Involvement
Letters, Leaflets, Customer Care Cards Questionnaires, and newsletters	*	Information Consultation
Social Events	*	Information
Focus Groups	*	Information Involvement
TACT and Tenant Association web pages	*	Information Involvement
Information Sharing Sessions in Sheltered Schemes	*	Information Consultation Involvement
Estate Inspections (Walkabouts)	**	Involvement
Local Groups and Local Agreements	**	Information, Involvement
Tenants and Residents Associations	**	Information, Consultation, Involvement
Tenant Talk	**	Information, Consultation, Involvement
Jigsaw – Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) User Group	**	Information, Consultation, Involvement
Leaseholder Forum	***	Information, Consultation, Decision
Newsletter Working Party	***	Information, Consultation, Decision
Specialist Forums	***	Information, Consultation, Decision
Social Issues Scrutiny Panel	***	Information, Participation
TACT	***	Information, Consultation, Decision
Task and Finish Groups (Council initiated)	***	Information, Consultation, Decision
Tenant and Residents Association Representatives	***	Information, Consultation, Decision
Tenant Inspection Group	***	Information, Consultation, Decision

Star rating

* Low level of commitment - letters, questionnaires, newsletters, focus groups, and occasional contact with tenants and the Council.

** Medium level of commitment – irregular meetings and occasional contact with tenants and the Council.

*** High level of commitment - regular meetings with tenants and the Council.

The Options above are a general guide to your involvement. The Council recognises that many may not want, or be able, to get involved in the ways mentioned. You can still get involved by:

- letter writing
- using the telephone
- fax or email
- text
- a home visit
- reading regular newsletters produced for tenants and their families
- completing surveys and questionnaires

You choose – it's your choice.

D. The Councillor's Role

Councillors are responsible and accountable for policy and strategic decisions and ensuring legal requirements are met.

A Councillor will (either individually or through Council systems):

- Consult, communicate and address the needs of tenants when policies are amended and developed.
- Be honest, listen and be non-judgmental when approached by tenants for a change of housing strategy.
- Provide feedback.
- Be supportive, strengthening links with tenants to promote an understanding of local community issues and the implementation of the Compact.
- Support an Equality and Diversity policy

E. The role of Council staff

Council staff at every level will work to ensure the success of the Agreement by:

- Constructively responding to tenants needs and wishes when they develop and deliver housing services.
- Developing better working relationships with tenants and leaseholders.
- Working in a flexible way to adapt to the needs of tenants.
- Allowing additional time, where possible, when tenants are being consulted on housing services and policies.

- Arranging meetings and training events between tenants and the Council to assist and help develop the relationship.
- Arranging meetings at locations and times that will attract more tenant involvement.
- Putting into action the policies of the Council.

F. Equality and Diversity

We believe that true involvement cannot exist without a real commitment to achieving equality of opportunity:

Our involvement structure has been designed to remove barriers which may prevent involvement and encourage wider participation.

This is demonstrated by:

- TACT Afternoon and Evening meetings - to ensure that as many people as possible can attend a meeting.
- Jigsaw, the Black and Minority Ethnic User Group.
- Contributing towards your travel expenses, childcare and carer costs to enable you to attend meetings.
- Information Sharing Sessions at Sheltered Schemes.
- Leaseholder Forum.
- Tenant Talk.

We are committed to having appropriate regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion and ethnic origin, marital status and disability, when we consult and involve you.

On request leaflets, newsletters, publicity material and other participation material can be provided in different formats and interpreters or signers can be arranged.

These include:

- large print
- audio tape
- Braille
- Easy read
- other languages

We will arrange meetings at convenient times, and try not to conflict with religious, care or other commitments.

All meetings will be accessible for persons with disabilities.

We can provide training and support to suit your needs, and will also contribute to your travel expenses, childcare and carer costs to help you to get involved.

We are still learning how to make it easier for all our customers to give us their views. If there is something which prevents you from being involved, contact us and discuss how we can make your involvement possible.

For further information of Equality and Diversity see the Tenants Handbook.

Core standards

These are agreed levels of service or support. Tenants will have the opportunity to be involved in reviewing these standards and monitoring performance.

1. Support for tenants

The Council recognises that it needs to make funds available to support and maintain tenant involvement from tenants' rents held in the Housing Revenue Account. The Tenant Involvement budget will make the following resources available in consultation with TACT.

- A dedicated Tenant Involvement Manager, a Tenant Participation Officer, Area Housing Manager, and other staff, Council-wide as required.
- Funding for recognised tenants' and residents' groups including an annual grant, and start up grants for new groups.
- Facilities including the access to meeting rooms, photocopying and stationery.
- Access to support for typing and distributing meeting notes, agendas, and local newsletters.
- Contribute to out of pocket expenses for attendance at meetings, which will include transport costs, for example bus fares, reimbursement of mileage to and from meetings, car parking tariffs; childcare and caring expenses.
- Taxis to meetings, for those who do not have access to transport.
- Access to an annual budget for:
 - Books and publications
 - Room hire to hold meetings
 - Membership and free independent advice from The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) -as well as voluntary organisations and other public bodies.
 - A range of options available to encourage more tenants to get involved at levels to suit their needs and issues.
 - Any other reasonable requests for support as agreed by TACT and the Tenant Involvement Manager.
- Access to training identified by TACT, Tenants Associations, including free training sessions organised through partnership working between Local Authorities and Housing Associations dedicated to providing cost-effective training for tenants.

Full information on:

- The resources to implement tenant involvement policies, including money and staff time,
- Which council staff have responsibility for tenant involvement,

- What resources are available to support training for representatives and groups of tenants to maintain tenant involvement,
- Any other housing matter requested, so long as it is publicly available and releasing information does not break confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998.

2. Standards for Information

The style and content of all written material should be easy to understand and available to everybody.

All information about housing services will be in plain language, timely and relevant to tenants' needs. Individual tenants will receive information on issues that directly affect them. This information will be provided on request wherever possible in large print, other languages, Braille and on audio-cassette. See also Equality & Diversity on page 10

The Council will provide information on:

- Housing Management - including present and future capital works, for example new build and major improvements contracts.
- Housing strategies, policies and procedures, business plans, housing investment options and plans.
- Other relevant services.
- Continuous Performance Assessment; planning, developing and implementing; monitoring and reviewing performance and setting service standards and targets.
- This Agreement including support for local agreements.
- The Council's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Strategy.

3. Standards for TACT Representatives

TACT is the formal district-wide tenant and leaseholder consultative forum, which is made up of tenants that are representative of the area where they live, as well as individual tenant volunteers, councillors, and senior officers. They meet every month and work in partnership with the Council to improve the housing service for all tenants.

As a district-wide tenant and leaseholder consultative forum, with a formal role in the decision-making process, a number of core standards have been agreed to ensure that tenants are wherever possible representative of the area where they live. These core standards are listed below and need to be followed for a tenant to become a TACT representative who is recognised by the Council, and a member of the TACT group.

TACT representatives should:

- Be either a tenant or a leaseholder of the Council.
- Be nominated and supported by a minimum of six local residents in the area that they live (who must be either a tenant or a leaseholder of the Council) on an annual basis.
- Comply with the Council's confidentiality policy at all times.
- Where possible encourage tenants to contact the Council direct. There may however be occasions when they may need to represent tenants' views and concerns to the Council on the tenant's behalf.

- Where requested act as an advocate for local people in their area.
- Not use their position of influence to raise issues relating to their own tenancy or lease. These issues must be dealt with through the normal channels available to all tenants.
- Attend a minimum of four Tenants' and Residents' Association meetings every year in the area they represent.
- Attend a minimum of six TACT meetings every year.

TACT representatives, who comply with the standards set out above, and wish to be part of the Council's decision-making process, are entitled to full support from the Council.

The Council will work in partnership with TACT representatives and assist them in every possible way to help them achieve these standards.

The Council will conduct an annual review to ensure that the above standards are kept and assess how best representatives can be supported in their role.

4. Standards for Tenants' and Residents' Groups

Support and encouragement will be provided to set up tenants and residents groups across the district, meeting the needs and interests of local people.

Tenants will be encouraged to make links with other tenants organisations or residents groups on estates to share knowledge, allow wider consultation and jointly resolve common issues.

The current structure for involvement has been reviewed, to take into account different levels of involvement, and to ensure that formal and informal groups and individual tenants take part in the decision making process. The tenant involvement structure can be seen on page 22.

Where groups have a formal role in decision-making, either local to an area or district wide, they should be able to show that as far as is reasonable they are democratic, accountable and have the following:

- A written constitution approved by the Council and TACT.
- An Equality and Diversity statement.
- Yearly democratic elections of Officers (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, etc).
- Regular meetings which are minuted and publicised.
- A level of attendance, approved by the Council that demonstrates a commitment to involving local tenants.
- A means of feeding back information to members of the group, local tenants and TACT.
- A minimum of one tenant representative who is nominated and elected by the group every year to join TACT and pass on the concerns of their group.

Recognised groups will be encouraged to undertake an annual review to check that the

group is complying with the above standards.

5. Standards for Meetings

Meetings are one way in which the Council and tenants can share information and work together in the decision making process. Each meeting should:

- Be publicised effectively and in good time
- Be organised at times and venues to suit most tenants.
- Have an agenda giving details of what will be discussed at the meeting.
- Have a Chairperson who conducts the meeting properly and ensures that all attendees have an opportunity to speak.
- Have minutes, or meeting notes, with a clear action plan to deal with matters arising.

Arrangements should exist for reporting the outcome of the meeting to tenants, TACT and to the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

If you are finding it difficult to meet any of the standards for Tenants' and Residents Groups and Meetings set out above just give the Tenant Involvement Section a call on Freephone 0800 716 987 and we will do all we can to help.

We can give you help and advice on:

- Organising your meetings.
- Producing agendas and minutes.
- Producing leaflets and posters to publicise your meetings.
- Delivering your publicity material.
- How to increase the number of tenants that attend your meetings.
- Producing a newsletter including putting articles together, arranging meetings for you to discuss the design, and printing the number of copies you need.

TACT and Tenants' and Residents' Associations will also give help, advice, and support if asked. Contact details can be found on the web site - www.winchester.gov.uk/TACT , or by contacting the Tenant Involvement Team on Freephone 0800 716 987.

These are just a few ways in which help and support is available. For other ways see Support for Tenants on page 11.

6. Standards for Housing Services

Tenants can play an important role in the delivery and improvement of housing services. Tenants will be consulted and can be involved in the decision-making processes in the following areas:

Developing the Council's housing policies, strategy and business plan

Tenants will help develop and influence housing policies through groups such as TACT, specialist forums, Cabinet and the appropriate scrutiny panels, task and finish groups and informal and formal working parties.

Drawing up the Council's capital and renovation programmes

Tenants will be involved and consulted about capital and renovation programmes through Specialist Forums, and TACT. Tenants will be individually consulted about schemes affecting their property. Tenant and Residents Associations, and the Councils quarterly newsletter for tenants and their families may also be used for consultation on individual schemes.

Budget, finance and rent setting

Tenants will be involved in, and influence budgets, finance and rent setting through the specialist forums and TACT.

Anti-Social Behaviour policies

The Council, together with the TACT Co-optees, will consider these policies, through TACT, specialist forums, Cabinet and appropriate scrutiny panels.

Management of Housing Services

Cabinet and the relevant scrutiny panel, together with TACT Co-optees will consider the policies for all landlords including estate management, void repairs, improvements, tenant Involvement, rent collection, leasehold matters, sheltered housing services, environmental works and tenancy conditions.

7. Standards for Monitoring Performance

The Agreement and the Action Plan set out the aspirations and targets for the Tenant Involvement service. For tenant involvement to work it is necessary to monitor, valuate and measure its success. This can be achieved by use of National and Local Performance Indicators.

The Performance Indicators used to measure the success and effectiveness of the Agreement and Tenant Involvement are follows:

National Performance Indicators (these are required by the Government)

- satisfaction of all tenants with the overall services provided,
- satisfaction of all tenants with the Tenant Participation Compact

As part of our commitment to continual improvement a postal survey will be sent to tenants which will include the above indicators. This survey will be carried out every three years in accordance with Government guidelines and the results will be fed back to all tenants using the Council's tenant newsletter.

Local Performance Indicators Tenants' Groups

- The number of tenants' and residents' groups recognized by the Council.
- The percentage of tenants and leaseholders covered by a tenants' and residents group recognized by the Council.
- The number of newly formed tenants' and residents' groups recognized by the Council in any one year.

Support to Tenants' and Residents' Groups

- The number of tenants attending training courses or seminars arranged by the Council.
- The level of tenant satisfaction with the training courses arranged by the Council.

Structures and processes

- The number of tenant and leaseholder representatives on the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel and Informal Member/Officer Groups.
- The percentage of housing-related reports that are presented to TACT and have a TACT comment before they are put before Cabinet and the appropriate Scrutiny Panel.

Communication

- The number and percentage of tenants responding to surveys
- Number of editions of the tenants' newsletters issued in the year

Monitoring and Dealing with Complaints and Disputes

There must be a regular check on how well tenant Involvement arrangements are working. The Government's Framework requires the Agreement to have an internal complaints and disputes procedure that can be started by all parties (tenants or the Council).

Types of Complaints

All complaints relating to compliance with the Agreement will be dealt with by the Council's Complaints Procedure. These may be about the lack of consultation or Involvement. They could include specific comments (for example the Council changing heating without consultation), or general (the Council is not supporting tenants' and residents' associations as agreed in the Agreement), or any complaint about a Tenants' and Residents' Group or TACT. Publicity contained within the Tenants Handbook, and the leaflet 'How to Complain' will ensure tenants are fully aware of this procedure.

Review

The Tenant Participation Compact Monitoring Group will receive at its bi-monthly meeting a report detailing all complaints relating to the Agreement.

Stage 1	If the group takes the view that a series of complaints, or failures have amounted to a breach of the Agreement, then the Tenant Participation Compact Monitoring Group will register this complaint with the Head of Landlord Services.
Stage 2	The Head of Landlord Services will reply to these concerns within 14 days. If the Tenant Compact Monitoring Group is not happy with the situation, they can take this to the next monthly meeting of TACT.
Stage 3	If the complaint remains unresolved, then it will be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the relevant Council Scrutiny Panel for discussion and recommendation.
Stage 4	If the recommendation is not acceptable then the complaint will be referred to an external mediator.

Contacts and further information

Tenant Involvement Team

Glynis Cole	Free phone: 0800 716 987
Tenant Involvement Manager	Email: gcole@winchester.gov.uk
David Lumby	Free phone: 0800 716 987
Tenant Participation Officer	Email: dlumby@winchester.gov.uk

TACT (Tenants and Council Together) Consultative Forum

Beryl White	Telephone: 0800 716 987
Afternoon Group	Email: bwhite@winchester.gov.uk
Alan Rickman	Telephone: 01962 885 848
Evening Group	Email: arickman@winchester.gov.uk

TACT web pages: www.winchester.gov.uk/TACT

Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TARA)

Information on Tenants' and Residents' Associations can be found on the Council's website on www.winchester.gov.uk/TACT and then clicking on the link Tenant Associations. Alternatively you can give the Tenant Involvement Team a call on Free phone 0800 716 987.

For all general tenancy related queries:

Contact the Council's Customer Service Centre

Phone: 01962 840 222 (between 8am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: customerservice@winchester.gov.uk or complete an [online enquiry form](#)

Text telephone number: 01962 878 982 (For Customers who are hard of hearing or speech impaired).

SMS text messages: 07797 877 004

Other organisations

Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)

5th Floor
Trafford House
Chester Road
Manchester
M32 0RS
Telephone: 0161 868 3500
Email: info@tpas.org.uk
Website: www.tpas.org.uk

**The National Tenants
Resource Centre**

Trafford Hall
Ince Lane
Wimbolds Trafford
Chester
CH2 4JP
Telephone: 01244 300 246
Website: www.traffordhall.com

Winchester City Council is a full member of TPAS and tenants are entitled to make full use of the services they offer. Visit their website for up to date information on training, conferences and information sheets to download, or contact them by phone for free advice on tenant involvement.

Funded by the Government, this independent organisation offers a wide range of useful and informative residential courses to help tenants become actively involved in their estate and communities.

InStep (Information Service for Tenants: Empowerment & Participation)

A free information service, funded by the Tenant Empowerment Programme, for tenants in social housing.

Telephone: Freephone 0500 844 111
Website: www.instepservices.co.uk

Links with other documents:

- 'One Compact for Hampshire' which includes specific codes of practice for funding, consultation and volunteering.
- Communication Strategy
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- The Housing Strategy
- Tenants Handbook
- TACT Welcome Leaflet
- TACT and Tenants' and Residents' Association web pages
- You can do it! A guide to Tenant Involvement in the Winchester District
- Setting Up a Tenants Association - A guide for Winchester City Council Tenants and leaseholders
- Tenant Talk Leaflet and Questionnaire

The above documents can be found either on our website www.winchester.gov.uk or by contacting the Tenant Involvement Team on 0800 716 987 to request a copy.

Jargon Busting!

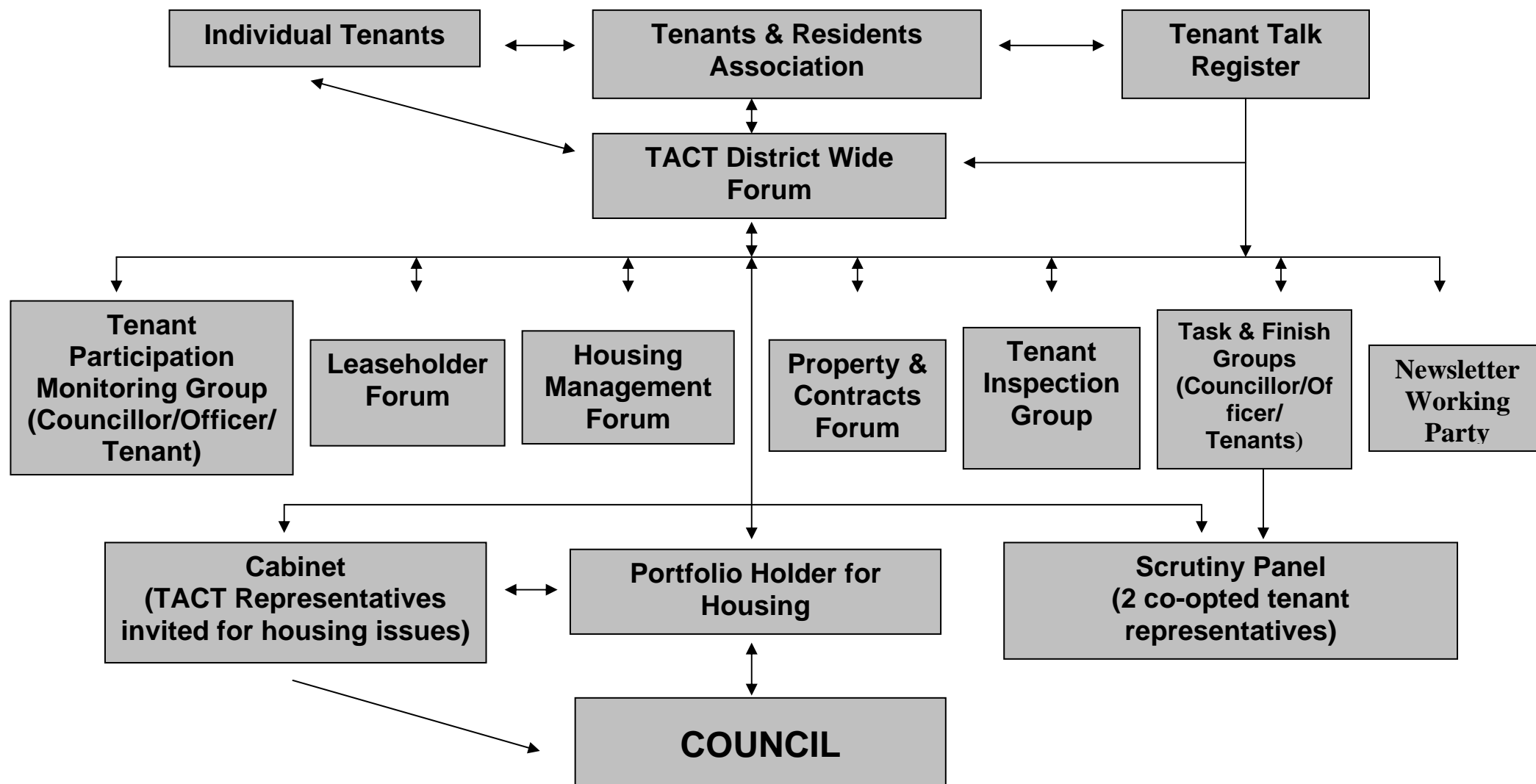
What does it all mean?

Department of Communities and Local Government	Lead central Government Department for housing policy.
Councillors (elected members)	People elected to serve on the Council to represent defined wards and to make Council policy.
Continuous Performance Assessment (CPA)	A way of assessing the performance of councils and the services they provide for local people.
Newsletter Working Party	A group of tenants/officers and Councillors that work together to produce quarterly newsletters for tenants, leaseholders and their families.
Core Standards	An agreed level of service or support to guide tenants and staff.
Co-optee	An elected tenant representative from TACT who has been formally invited to be involved in the Council's committee structure to tenants views on all housing-related reports presented to the housing related Scrutiny Panels and Cabinet.
Estate Inspections (Walkabouts)	Arranged by a representative from a Tenant Association and the Area Housing Manager three times a year to 'Walkabout' the estate looking at areas of concern to local residents. The group usually comprises five tenant representatives and several representatives from the Council
Focus Group	One off, small gathering of between six and 12 tenants, designed to gather information on specific housing related issues. Meetings usually last between one and two hours.
Housing Management	A range of housing-related services, including rent arrears and estate management aimed at ensuring tenants and residents have the quiet enjoyment of their homes.
Housing Management Forum	A formal group of tenants and officers that meet every two months to identify, discuss and agree on ways to promote and improve the Housing Management service provided for tenants.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	Housing Revenue Account is the Council account into which rents and any money from the Government are paid. It pays for repairs, managing and maintaining the housing properties and repaying any money borrowed for past building and improvements.
Housing Strategy	A document produced by all local authorities setting out broad policy aims as well as specific objectives and targets for providing affordable housing in both the public and private sector.
Housing Subsidy	Money from the Government, paid into a local authority's HRA. It makes up the difference between what the Government thinks the Council should spend on housing, and what it assumes it is receiving in rent income.

Inspection Regime	The Audit Commission's programme and process of inspections to review the effectiveness and quality of housing services provided by local authorities.
Jigsaw - Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) User Group	A group of tenants and waiting list applicants who have a different cultural background from the majority of Winchester district residents. This group meets to discuss service delivery from a black and minority ethnic point of view.
Leaseholders	Tenants who live in flats or maisonettes bought from the Council.
Leaseholder Forum	An informal group of Leaseholders and officers which meets every three months to identify, debate and agree on ways to promote and improve the service provided to all leaseholders district wide.
National and Local Performance Indicators	These are a range of other service areas identified as important to monitor and report on performance by the Council and/or TACT.
One Compact for Hampshire	A partnership agreement between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Public Sector in Hampshire.
Property & Contracts Forum	A formal group of tenants and officers which meets every two months to identify, discuss and agree on ways to promote and improve the full range of property related services provided for tenants.
Serco Project Team	A formal group of senior and operational managers from Serco and Winchester City Council's Contract and Property Services, including two tenant representatives, which meets monthly to review the operational management of the term maintenance contract.
South Coast Training Group	A group of local authorities and housing associations that work in partnership to produce cost effective training for tenants.
Social Issues Scrutiny Panel (SISP)	A formal Council Committee of appointed Councillors and TACT representatives which meets regularly throughout the year, to monitor performance and budgetary control in respect to the housing service provided of the Council.
TACT (Tenants & Council Together)	The Councils' formal district-wide tenant consultative forum made up of tenants that are representative of the area where they live, individual tenant volunteers, councillors and senior officers, who meet every month and work in partnership with the City Council to improve the housing service for all tenants.
Task and Finish Groups	Informal Councillor/Officer/tenant working group dealing with specific issues.
Tenants' and Residents Association	A democratic organisation set up in a specific area to meet the needs of tenants locally. They meet regularly and enable tenants to join forces to tackle issues and problems together.
Tenants Handbook Review Group	A group of tenants and officers that review the Handbook to ensure that it is kept up to date.
Tenant Inspection Group	A partnership of Local Authorities and Housing Associations giving tenants an opportunity to examine, question, compare and highlight good practice and suggest improvements to Housing Services provided by their landlord.

Tenant Involvement Manager	A specialist officer with responsibility to develop the Council's Tenant Involvement Strategy who's aim is to achieving effective tenant involvement in the management and delivery of the housing service.
Tenant Participation Advisory Service(TPAS)	A national organisation dedicated to tenant involvement, offering training and support for individual tenants and tenant organisations.
Tenant Participation Compact Participation Monitoring Group (TPCMG)	A tenant/councillor/officer group, which meets regularly to monitor that the Agreement is working and is kept up to date. They will also register and monitor any disputes that arise as a result of the Agreement as well as setting new objectives and targets contained within the Action Plan, on an annual basis.
Tenant Participation Officer	A support officer with responsibility to assist in developing and implementing the Council's Tenant Involvement Strategy, as well as encouraging and supporting tenant involvement within the Winchester district.
Tenant Talk	A register of tenants and leaseholders who have completed a Tenant Talk Questionnaire and told us they would like to get involved from time to time in the ways and the services that interest them.

Tenant Involvement Structure



Compact Action Plan 2008-2010

Objective	Action	Target dates	Responsibility
Extend Tenant Involvement through a mix of involvement activities for tenants and leaseholders expressing an interest in getting involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the numbers of tenants and leaseholders' on the Tenant Talk Register • Promote Tenant Talk • Maintain Register • Raising awareness of Council Staff to its existence and purpose 	100 new tenants and leaseholders per annum for 2008, 2009 and 2010	Tenant Involvement Team.
Consultation with all Sheltered Scheme Tenants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liase with tenants/staff in Sheltered housing • set up Information Sharing Sessions. 	3 Information Sessions by March 2009	Tenant Participation Officer with relevant TACT Reps and staff.
Supported Housing Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise inaugural meeting of the Supported Housing Forum made up of elected representatives from sheltered housing schemes • Establish the Supported Housing Forum to monitor and improve the supported housing service for older persons. 	<p>July 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p>	Housing Services Manager, Tenant Participation Officer and officers for the supported housing team.
Estate Walkabouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support existing Estate Walkabouts • Extend to areas that are not covered by Tenants & Residents Associations 	Ongoing 2 new areas per annum for 2008, 2009 and 2010	Tenant Involvement Team with Area Housing Managers and Councillors.

Financial support for recognised tenants groups, including an annual grant and start up grants for new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the level of financial support provided by other housing organisations • Produce guidance notes including application forms etc 	September 2008	Tenant Involvement Manager and Tenant Participation Officer and TACT.
Childcare and caring expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the level of financial assistance provided by other Social Landlords • Produce guidance notes and claim form 	September 2008	Tenant Involvement Manager and Tenant Participation Officer with TACT and PR Consultant.
Induction pack and half day induction training for new TACT members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an induction pack • Organise a half day induction session for new TACT members explaining their role and responsibilities. 	October 2008	TACT members with the assistance of Tenant Participation Team and PR Consultant.
Local Area Compacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research how other social landlords have set them up • Produce a Local Area Compact working with an existing Tenants and Residents Associations • Role out to all Tenants and Residents Associations 	<p>March 2009</p> <p>March 2010</p>	Tenant Involvement Team with the assistance of existing Tenant's and Residents Associations
BME and other hard to reach groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop links to ensure all have an opportunity to contribute to service development 	March 2009	Tenant Participation Officer.

Review Compact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review • Update as appropriate 	Annually each July	TPCMG with the assistance of the Tenant Involvement Team.
TACT and Tenant Involvement web page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update web pages as appropriate 	Ongoing	Tenant Involvement Manager with the assistance of, PR Consultant, TPCMG, TACT and TA'S.
Training opportunities for Tenants/TACT and TA's.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and run two training conferences per year in partnership with South Coast Training 	April and October each year	Tenant Involvement Manager in partnership with SCT and TPCMG.
Tenant Involvement training for Councillors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a training session for staff and Councillors • Increase awareness of the Tenant Involvement function with the Local Authority 	October 2008	Tenant Involvement Manager with relevant staff/councillors/tenants and external consultants.
Tenants Handbook Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and publish the handbook in light of the amended tenancy conditions 	July 2008	Tenant Involvement Manager and the Tenant Handbook Review Working Party and PR Consultant.
<i>on the house</i> and Tenant News newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate the production of 3 editions 	June 2008/October 2008/March 2009	Tenant Involvement Manager working in partnership with the Newsletter Working Party and PR Consultant.
Tenant Involvement Policy and Procedure (P & P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce/Revise the Tenant involvement P & P 	August 2008	Tenant Involvement Team in consultation with The Housing Management Forum and TACT.
Public Liability Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source insurance policy for TACT and recognised Tenants and Residents Groups 	March 2009	Tenant Involvement Manager, Corporate Risk Management and Insurance Officer, in consultation with TPCMG and Tenants and Residents Groups.