

Summary of the Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement

April 2008



Cover Photographs

(Clockwise from top left)

Houses at Underleys, Beer

Photo competition winning entry* of view from Cliff Field Gardens, Seaton, by Bethany Chick

Sheltered accommodation in Broadview, Broadclyst

A photo of the flats at Brooklyn Park, Exmouth by Ted Brown

Photo competition winning entry* of his garden in Newton Pophleford by Mr T Kimber

Jacob's Ladder, Sidmouth

Bystock Ponds in Woodbury Common

Adapted sheltered accommodation in Honiton

Photo competition runner-up* of Exmouth Marina by Sue Williams

*Photo competition - Partnership News Issue 11 November 2006

Other languages, large print and audio formats



English	This document is available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request.
Bengali	এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায়, বড় স্পিট আকারে এবং অডিও ট্রেপ আকারেও অনুরোধে পাওয়া যায়।
Chinese Mandarin	本文件也可應要求，制作成其它语文或特大字体版本，也可制作成录音带。
Chinese Cantonese	本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。
French	Ce document est également disponible dans d'autres langues, en gros caractères et en cassette audio sur simple demande.
Italian	A richiesta questo documento è anche disponibile in altre lingue, a caratteri grandi e in formato audio.
Portuguese	Este documento encontra-se também disponível noutros idiomas, em tipo de imprensa grande e em formato áudio, a pedido.
Punjabi	ਇਹ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਅਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।
German	Dieses Material ist auf Wunsch auch in anderen Sprachen, in Großdruck und auf Tonband erhältlich.
Hindi	अनुरोध पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छायाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है।
Urdu	درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔
Polish	Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formacie audio.
Spanish	Este documento también está disponible y puede solicitarse en otros idiomas, en letra grande y formato de audio.

Telephone **01395 516551** for more information

Summary of the Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement

April 2008

Contents

Jargon explained	2
Introduction	3
What is the Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement?	4
The way ahead - involvement	5
Exchanging information	7
Consultation	7
Participating and working together	8
Future development of tenant involvement	9
Support for tenant involvement	10
What you can expect from the Housing and Social Inclusion Service	12
How everyone will know the agreement is working	13
Appendix 1: The structure of the Housing and Social Inclusion Service	14
Appendix 2: How to contact us	15
Key action points from the action plan	16

Key

For ease of use, the agreement uses these boxes to distinguish between statements and quotations, and things we are currently doing.



Statements and quotations



Current actions

Jargon explained

We have tried to write this agreement using plain language. However there may be some terms which need explanation.

Allocation

The way in which tenants are placed in suitable accommodation.

Antisocial behaviour

Behaviour which impacts negatively on a resident's or visitor's quality of life in and around their home.

Choice Based Lettings

This is the scheme through which we allocate most of our council housing. It gives you a greater choice of where to live, while continuing to meet housing needs and building settled and stable communities.

Compact

An agreement between a council and its tenants which sets out the ways in which tenants can be involved with housing services.

Constitution

The rules which set out how an organisation, such as a residents association, will operate.

Council

East Devon District Council.

Diversity

Respecting everyone as an individual, irrespective of any group they may belong to because of their race, religion, disability or for any other reason.

Equal Opportunities

Treating everyone fairly and giving everyone equal access to services.

Housing Stock Options Appraisal

This study, carried out in 2004/05, looked at the future ownership and management options for council housing within East Devon.

Leaseholder

Someone who has bought their flat from the Council, but where the Council still owns the freehold of the building.

Panel or TLCP

The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel.

Recharge

We will recover costs from tenants where repairs or services have been carried out by the Council but which are the obligation of the tenant.

Responsive Repairs

Repairs which are not emergency or urgent, and are done at the request of the tenant.

Risk Assessment

A plan which identifies any further help tenants on sheltered schemes may require to live safely within the home.

Service Charge

The sum payable by a tenant or leaseholder for services provided by the landlord.

Service level agreement

An agreement which sets out in detail the type of service that will be provided, by whom and when.

Support Plan

A plan drawn up for tenants on our sheltered schemes which identifies the level of assistance individuals require from the Scheme Manager or Mobile Support Officer.

Tenant

A person responsible for paying rent to the Council. In this agreement this also includes 'leaseholders' who pay ground rent and service charges to the Council.

Tenant body

All our tenants as a group.

Terms of Reference

Guidelines within which an organisation can operate.

Void

A property which is empty and waiting for a new tenant.

Introduction

This booklet gives an overview of the aims and objectives of Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement and the ways in which tenants can be involved with the Housing and Social Inclusion Service.

If you would like to receive a copy of the full agreement please contact the Tenant Participation team on **01395 517453** or email **tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk**.

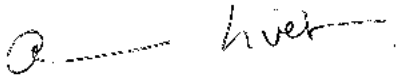
Mission Statement

To encourage tenants to make a real difference to the East Devon District Council Housing and Social Inclusion Service, by having a significant voice and being involved at every level of decision making.

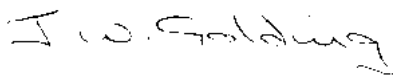
To achieve the ultimate aim of continually improving the services to tenants by setting realistic standards and by careful monitoring.

It promises full tenant, leaseholder and councillor involvement in every aspect of housing.

This agreement has been signed on behalf of East Devon District Council, it's staff, councillors and tenants by:



Councillor Ann Liverton
Chairman of the Housing Review Board



John Golding
Head of Housing and Social Inclusion



Mrs Ann Bickham
Chairman of the Tenant and Leaseholder
Customer Panel



Mrs Ann Bickham, John Golding and Councillor Ann Liverton signing the agreement on 14 April 2008

What is the Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement?

The agreement sets out how tenants can have a voice in the housing services and be involved in decision making at all levels within the Council.

- It has been written by a working group of tenants, councillors and housing staff.
- It is aimed at all tenants, leaseholders, councillors and staff.
- It's ultimate aim is to improve services to you, as a tenant or leaseholder.

The working group wants this agreement to be meaningful to all tenants, councillors and staff, and to make a significant difference to the Housing and Social Inclusion Service.

The agreement explains:

- what information you will receive about the housing services
- how you will be consulted about the housing services
- how you will be involved in making decisions about these services
- how you can help set standards and monitor the services provided.

'Being happy, secure and content in our own home is the aim of everyone and by encouraging tenant involvement through this agreement we aim to ensure that this will be the case for all tenants of East Devon District Council.'

*Councillor Ann Liverton,
Chairman of the Housing Review Board*

'When it comes down to the nitty gritty tenants, councillors and officers want the same thing - a first class housing service.'

*Bryony Watkins,
Tenant Participation Officer*

What can the agreement do for you, as a tenant or leaseholder?

The agreement will help you:

- have a voice in the decisions which affect your home, eg repairs and maintenance, improvements to your environment
- ensure better value and quality from the Housing and Social Inclusion Service
- join tenants groups
- challenge and ask questions about how the housing services, and other council services are operated
- improve the community in which you live by looking at social problems such as traffic issues, antisocial behaviour
- create a better community spirit by supporting local events and getting to know your neighbours
- improve your skills and understanding through training courses
- promote equal opportunities in your community.

The way ahead - involvement

The agreement outlines the ways in which you can be involved with all levels of the housing service.

Involvement - your choice!

Many people are put off the idea of getting involved. They are under the impression that they will have to spend hours sitting in meetings, listening to others! This isn't the case – just by picking up the telephone to give your point of view, you are participating.

There are many levels of involvement and you can do as much, or as little, as you choose.

'Why not get involved and help make the decisions that affect our lives. I did and I find the whole experience fascinating.

The Council is eager for us to play an active role in making the decisions that affect us. This agreement is not just 'hot air', not something put together to keep us quiet. It is a **promise** and it is working.

I and many other tenants involved in this joint venture are just ordinary people. Few of us have any specific qualifications but what we do have is the desire to influence the way our homes and communities are managed.

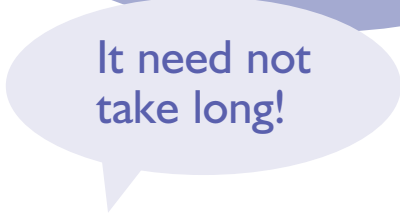
So why not get involved and help make the decisions that affect our lives. I have and I find the whole experience fascinating.

We have a voice and if we don't use it, we could loose it!

*Sue Saunders,
Tenant Housing Review Board member*



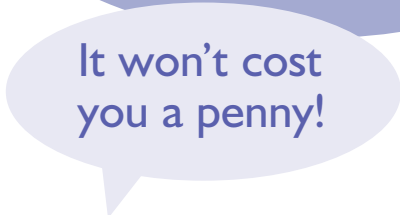
“ I haven't got time ”



It need not take long!



“ I can't afford it ”



It won't cost you a penny!

You Choose Your Level Of Involvement: Information - Consultation - Participation

The options	Type of involvement	Level of commitment
Responding to repairs satisfaction slips etc	Information Consultation	Low About 1-2 times a year
Area Forum meetings	Information Consultation	Low One meeting a year
Residents' Conference	Information Consultation	Low Once a year
Garden Competition	Information Consultation	Once a year
Estate Walkabouts	Information Consultation	Low About half a day once a year
Tenants Associations	Information Consultation Participation	Low/Medium 3-4 meetings per year
E consultation – consultation request sent by email	Consultation	Low/Medium Every 2/3 months
Reading group	Consultation Participation	Low/Medium 1-2 hours every 2/3 months
Telephone and postal surveys	Consultation Participation	Low/Medium 1-2 hours every 2/3 months
Service Review Groups	Consultation Participation	Medium About 6 meetings a year
Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel	Information Consultation Participation	High 10 meetings a year plus reading and preparation
Housing Review Board	Information Consultation Participation	High 6 meetings per year plus reading and preparation

Exchanging information

You will receive information from the Council in a number of different ways:

- by letter, email, telephone calls and visits on specific topics
- by the housing newsletters, Housing Standard, Partnership News and Sheltered News, which are each sent out twice a year
- by attending meetings
- by reading the EDDC website www.eastdevon.gov.uk.

You can pass information to the Council by:

- letter, email or telephone
- responding to items in the newsletters, or on the website

- at meetings with housing officers
- speaking to a member of staff or councillor.

The Council will ensure that information is attractively presented, written in plain English and as 'jargon free' as possible.

Information, documents and newsletters can be provided in the following formats:

- audio cassette or CD
- large print
- braille
- different languages.

Consultation

Some of the ways in which you can all take part in consultation include:

- filling in and returning Repairs and Maintenance, Estate Management or other satisfaction reply slips with answers that truly give your views
- responding to any survey forms which are sent out, such as the STATUS survey, or the Stock Options survey forms
- taking part in 'estate walkabouts'
- taking part in telephone surveys, mystery shopping exercises, email consultation
- joining the 'Key Player' list and taking part in consultation on specific topics which are of interest.

What is an 'estate walkabout'?

Tenants, councillors, and staff, together with other agencies such as the police or fire service, walk around one of the estates to look at issues such as rubbish, graffiti, abandoned cars, and antisocial behaviour. Problems are identified and actions agreed to tackle them. Tenants may want to be involved on their own estates or may also wish to look at other areas in the district.

What is mystery shopping?

Mystery shopping assesses the standards of service provided, and looks at how helpful staff are, whether they give clear and accurate help and advice, how long they take to answer queries, and whether they meet the service standard requirements. You can train as a 'mystery shopper' and, as part of a team, undertake a variety of assignments such as visiting, or telephoning council offices to make an enquiry regarding an aspect of work.

What is the Key Player list?

This is a list of tenants and leaseholders who are prepared to be consulted on various topics. This may involve:

- reading and commenting on various documents
- filling out questionnaires
- taking part in focus group discussions
- telephone conferences or surveys
- taking part in estate walkabouts.

The topics for consideration are varied and include repairs and maintenance, community development, younger/older tenants or black and minority ethnic tenants.

There are various ways in which tenants can be consulted, including

- **‘e-consultation’** – for those who are happy to be contacted by email
- **reading panel** – for those who are prepared to read through and comment on documents before they are sent out to the wider tenant body

- **telephone survey group** – for those who are prepared to be contacted at home to answer over the phone surveys
- **postal survey group** – for those who are happy to answer brief surveys at home.

Participating and working together

There are many ways in which you can participate with the work of the Housing and Social Inclusion Service.

Area Forum meetings and the Residents’ Conference

The Housing and Social Inclusion Service holds annual meetings, known as Area Forums, across the district where you can come to ask questions about the services provided. At least four meetings will happen each year, in a different venue throughout the district. All tenants and leaseholders will be invited to attend one of these meetings.

The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel organises a Residents’ Conference once a year. The conferences are open to any tenants and leaseholders who wish to come.

Tenant or Resident Associations

Recognised groups can make decisions on behalf of their members, apply for financial backing and have a representative on the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel.

Associations will:

- regularly seek the views of their members and the local community
- hold an Annual General Meeting once a year to elect the committee

- hold General meetings, give feedback on the association’s activities, listen to views and concerns of tenants and local residents, and offer help and advice where appropriate.

Associations have a close working relationship with their local councillors, police and council staff and are therefore in a good position to pass on any concerns members have to the appropriate person.

The full agreement gives details about the criteria for tenants associations and the support that the Council can give.

Service review groups

These groups look at particular areas of work, such as repairs and maintenance or the sheltered housing service. Half the members of the group should be service users and half front line staff and/or contractors.

The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel (TLCP)

The Panel is made up of representatives from tenant and resident associations, and other interested tenants from across the district. It considers issues which affect the majority of tenants across the district but does not deal with individual problems. It has a constitution, elected officers and committee and currently meets about ten times per year.

The Housing Review Board

The Board was set up following the Housing Stock Options Appraisal. During the appraisal tenants, officers and councillors worked well together and the Board was formed to keep this work progressing. It is a new idea for a council which has retained its housing stock to set up such a Board.

The Board consists of 5 tenant members, 5 councillors and 2 independent community representatives. The tenants currently on the Board were selected from the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel but in future it will be open to other tenants to stand for election.

The Board considers reports presented by officers. These reports will usually have been considered and commented on by the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel. The Board reports directly to the Executive Committee and then to the Full Council of East Devon District Council.

Sharing experiences with others

Tenants should be able to compare and contrast their experience with tenants of other social landlords and the Council will support tenants in their involvement with national, regional or county wide initiatives.

The Right to Manage

If tenants are interested in setting up a tenant management organisation, for example for a geographical area or service such as communal cleaning, the Council will fund it in accordance with the Right to Manage legislation. Support will be given to any tenants who wish to investigate this form of management more fully.

Ensuring that all tenants have the opportunity to get involved

A 'Getting to know you better' survey will be used to identify any sections within the tenant body that are under represented or not represented at all. Tenants, councillors and staff will work with these groups to encourage involvement and make it easier for them to get involved. Effort will specifically be put into encouraging the involvement of young people.

Future development of tenant involvement

The Council is keen to continue to build up ways in which tenants can be involved in housing decisions at all levels. Staff are constantly looking for innovative ways for involvement and are keen to hear from anyone, tenants, other staff or councillors, who may have new ideas they would like considered. Please call **01395 517453** or email **tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk**.

These are some of the areas which will be developed in 2008 and 2009:

- expand the use of the service review groups
- strengthen tenant involvement with budget setting and monitoring
- consider introducing a tenant-led improvement budget
- appoint voluntary 'tenant inspectors'
- look to widen tenant choice
- ensure that there is better advertising of how tenant involvement has made a difference with service delivery
- look to involve tenants in the recruitment of housing staff
- consider introducing a freephone for tenants to leave their suggestions for improvements
- develop less formal ways to get involved.

Support for tenant involvement

The Council is committed to:

- supporting tenant involvement
- providing a tenant participation budget which will cover training, expenses, newsletters, garden competition, support material, transport costs and subscriptions
- funding an annual Residents' Conference
- supporting the Community Initiative Fund
- ensuring that there is sufficient staffing available to support tenant participation
- providing training for tenants, staff and councillors, either in-housing or by using outside providers
- ensuring all meetings are properly conducted
- supporting community development

There is a dedicated tenant participation budget and a separate budget for the Residents' Conferences.

The tenant participation budget covers:

- training costs for tenants, staff and councillors
- reimbursement of legitimate expenses
- production of the Partnership News and Housing Standard newsletters
- funding of the annual Garden Competition
- purchasing relevant books and other support material
- transport costs for example taxi and rail fares for tenants to attend meetings
- subscription to the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS).

Expenses

It is important that being involved in tenant participation does not leave you 'out of pocket'. Expenditure covered must have been spent when carrying out approved tenant involvement activities, and will include:

- a mileage allowance for tenants using their own transport to attend meetings, training courses etc
- telephone costs (on the production of an itemised bill)
- childcare and adult care expenses (on production of invoice or receipt)
- subsistence (in line with Council policy) – this covers meal and refreshment allowances if away from home when attending training or meetings
- an allowance for the use of printer ink, paper and the like when tenants use their own supplies.

Tenant Resource Centre

The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel will undertake a feasibility study to assess the need for a dedicated resource centre for tenant involvement work which will include computer, internet and library facilities.

Newsletters

Three different housing newsletters are currently each produced twice a year:

- **The Housing Standard**
- **The Partnership News** (the newsletter from the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel), and
- **Sheltered News** (for tenants on our sheltered schemes).

Tenants are involved in the editing of each of these.

The Community Initiative Fund

This is managed by the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel and is allocated to local community projects that are of benefit to tenants.

If you have a project or an idea that benefits tenants of East Devon District Council you can apply for a grant from the Community Initiative Fund. You don't need to be part of a recognised group to apply, but the funding has to go to a project which will benefit a number of tenants.

For further details please write to:

The Chairman of the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel
c/o the Tenant Participation Officer
East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth EX10 8HL

or email tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Staffing

There are currently two part-time Tenant Participation Officers. They are managed by the Housing Strategy Manager and have the support of other members of the Housing Strategy Unit. The Council will also be appointing a Community Development worker in 2008.

Our Leaseholder Services are supported by the Housing Asset and Business Development Officer and the Housing Business Unit.

Training

Training is an essential part of tenant involvement. The Council is committed to providing tenants, staff and councillors with the opportunity to take part in relevant training courses, at no cost to themselves.

Training is advertised in our housing newsletters and on the website www.eastdevon.gov.uk. If you are interested in attending a training course, or have a housing topic which you would like to

know more about please contact one of our Tenant Participation Officers. You will not have to pay to attend relevant courses and wherever possible we will organise transport to the venue, or reimburse your travel costs.

Meetings

Tenants, councillors and staff are committed to ensuring that all meetings are carried out in line with the following criteria:

- meetings are publicised effectively and are accessible to all
- meetings are properly chaired and conducted in a fair and democratic way
- information is provided in a way that is accessible to everyone
- tenants are able to give their honest and open opinions about the housing service
- meetings are not a correct venue for personal issues or criticism of individual tenants, councillors and staff
- groups agree an appropriate method of feeding back to those who attended, probably by keeping minutes
- groups are encouraged to actively seek the views of tenants who were not able to attend the meeting.

Access to independent advice

There may be occasions when tenants require advice other than from the staff and councillors of East Devon District Council. The Council will maintain membership of TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) and encourage residents associations to affiliate themselves with and use this service. Staff will also investigate providing access to tenants to other organisations such as HouseMark (a leading provider of performance improvement and value for money information).

What you can expect from the Housing and Social Inclusion Service

The agreement sets out the standards and policies that we work to and outlines some of the Housing Service documents.

The Housing Customer Charter gives further details about the standard of service which you can expect from us. This can be viewed on our website www.eastdevon.gov.uk. If you would like to receive a printed copy please contact the Housing Strategy Unit.

For all tenants and leaseholders

The Council will ensure that:

- you are treated in a friendly and courteous manner
- staff listen carefully to you, agree an appropriate course of action to meet your needs, and let you know how long this may take
- staff do not make promises which cannot be kept
- staff and contractors always wear an identity badge and, if telephoning, tell you the name of the person you are speaking to
- work is carried out to a high standard
- representatives and contractors treat you with respect.

In return the Council will expect you to:

- treat staff, representatives and contractors with respect and not behave aggressively towards them
- provide all the information needed so that staff can help you
- consider getting involved with the Housing and Social Inclusion Service in some way.

For each new tenant (including those in sheltered housing)

Each new tenant will have:

- the opportunity to view the property with a Housing Officer as early in the letting procedure as possible
- a sign up interview which covers the tenancy conditions and housing services
- a copy of their tenancy agreement
- a welcome pack
- a copy of the Tenant Handbook
- information about the local area
- information about low cost home contents insurance
- information about how to get involved with the Housing and Social Inclusion Service.

For tenants living in our sheltered housing

Staff will ensure that each tenant:

- meets with the Scheme Manager or Mobile Support Officer when they move into the property
- has a support plan and risk assessment drawn up to meet their requirements
- knows how to access Home Safeguard (our control centre with 24hr operator cover) and use the internal alarm.

Services for Leaseholders

The Council will provide up to date and accurate service charge information to all leaseholders on an annual basis, or more frequently if required. The Leasehold Home Owners Handbook gives information about the lease and the service provided to leaseholders and is given to all new leaseholders when they purchase a flat from the Council.

Service Planning Day

Once a year staff and tenants meet together to plan the work of the service for the coming year and to set priorities for that work, in light of the current issues facing the service and the Council as a whole.

What can you do if you are not happy with the opportunities to get involved?

If you are not happy about the opportunities available to get involved with the Housing and Social Inclusion Service, please write to:

The Chairman of the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel
c/o the Tenant Participation Officer
East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth EX10 8HL

or email tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk.

You will receive an acknowledgement of your correspondence within 5 working days, and the Panel will consider your complaint at their next meeting.

Alternatively you can raise the matter with your district councillor.

If you have a complaint

If you have a complaint about any other aspect of the service, for example the standard of a repair or the way in which a neighbour nuisance problem was dealt with, please write, email or telephone the officer concerned or their manager.

If you are still not happy please make use of the Council's complaints procedure, a copy of which can be obtained from the Complaints Officer by telephoning **01395 516551** or writing to:

East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth EX10 8HL.

Only after following the Council's complaints procedure, and if you are still dissatisfied, you can approach the Local Government Ombudsman for an independent review.

How everyone will know the agreement is working

Reviewing and monitoring the agreement and action plan

The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel, will set up a monitoring group consisting of tenants, councillors and staff, who will be responsible for monitoring this agreement.

An action plan has been drawn up based on the commitments made within this agreement. This will be regularly reviewed and updated. Information gathered from performance indicators and benchmarking will also be used to update the action plan.



Members of the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel March 2008

Appendix I: The structure of the Housing and Social Inclusion Service

The Housing and Social Inclusion Service is split into four different teams. They are:

- Housing Services Team
- Housing Business Unit
- Housing Strategy Unit
- Housing Needs Team.

Housing Services Team	Housing Business Unit	Housing Strategy Unit	Housing Needs Team
<p>Responsible for:</p> <p>Estate and tenancy management</p> <p>Community safety and antisocial behaviour</p> <p>Repairs and responsive maintenance</p> <p>Planned maintenance, improvements and adaptations</p> <p>Fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, condition of property</p> <p>Car parking, garages</p>	<p>Responsible for:</p> <p>Home Safeguard</p> <p>Rental and other income</p> <p>Right to Buy</p> <p>Scheme Managers/Mobile Support Officers Service</p> <p>Sheltered housing</p> <p>Supporting People</p> <p>Leaseholders</p> <p>Garden and grounds maintenance and communal cleaning</p> <p>Performance monitoring</p>	<p>Responsible for:</p> <p>Housing Strategy</p> <p>HRA Business Plan</p> <p>Research, information and support</p> <p>Affordable housing schemes</p> <p>Social inclusion, equality and diversity</p> <p>Policies and procedures</p> <p>Tenant participation and involvement</p> <p>Community Development</p>	<p>Responsible for:</p> <p>Housing advice and options</p> <p>Homelessness prevention</p> <p>Homelessness Strategy</p> <p>Housing Register</p> <p>Allocations, transfers and nominations</p> <p>Changes to tenancy agreements (eg terminations / successions)</p> <p>Special needs / supported housing</p> <p>Child protection and domestic violence</p> <p>Links with the private rented sector</p>

Appendix 2: How to contact us

East Devon District Council
Knowle, Sidmouth EX10 8HL

East Devon District Council website
www.eastdevon.gov.uk

Main switchboard

Tel. 01395 516551

Opening hours 8.30am – 5.00pm Monday – Friday

Emergency out of hours

Tel. 01395 516854

Housing Service Fax Number

01395 517508

Department	Telephone number	Email address
Council Tax and Housing Benefit	01395 517446	benefits@eastdevon.gov.uk
Estate Management (for problems around council estates, nuisance and antisocial behaviour)	01395 516551 ext 2381 or 2396	estatemangement@eastdevon.gov.uk
Home Safeguard (for enquiries about sheltered housing, emergency alarm service)	01395 578237	businessunit@eastdevon.gov.uk
Housing Needs (for enquiries regarding council housing allocations, transfers, exchanges, garage rental)	01395 516551	housingneeds@eastdevon.gov.uk
Housing Strategy Unit	01395 516551	housingstrategy@eastdevon.gov.uk
Repairs and Maintenance	01395 517458	repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk
Rental	01395 517444	rents@eastdevon.gov.uk
Streetscene (for enquiries about refuse and recycling, grounds maintenance, parks and gardens)	01395 517528	streetscene@eastdevon.gov.uk
Tenant Participation (for information about tenant involvement opportunities)	01395 517453	tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk

Key action points from the action plan

The full agreement sets out agreed action points throughout the document and there is a full action plan to March 2011. Listed below are some of the key action points from the action plan linked to the areas mentioned above.

Issue	Action	Target completion date
Estate Walkabouts	A yearly programme will be drawn up with tenants each March	April 2008
Mystery Shopping	At least 3 separate service areas will be looked at each year and the findings used to make improvements to the service	March 2009
Key Player list	This will be maintained, advertised and numbers increased by a minimum of 10 tenants per year	November 2008
Satisfaction slips for Estate Management	Introduced and the results used to improve the service provided	March 2008
Area Forum meetings	Continue to hold at least 4 meetings across the district each year	November 2008
Tenants Association	The funding available to, and criteria for, tenant and resident associations will be reviewed annually	August 2008
The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel	The Panel will be given training to effectively monitor the tenant participation budget	June 2008
Tenant Resource Centre	The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel will undertake a feasibility study to assess the need for a tenant resource centre and the costs involved	June 2008
Housing Review Board	The Housing Review Board will agree how tenant board members will be elected in future	December 2008
Housing Review Board	All reports to the Board will show the consultation undertaken with service users	December 2008
Reaching all groups	A 'Getting to know you better' survey will be carried out	September 2008
Reaching all groups	The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel will draw up an action plan specifically aimed at involving ethnic minority and under-represented groups	March 2009
Leaseholders	Leaseholders will be sent a questionnaire about the services they receive and will be asked to join a service review group	November 2008
Leaseholders	The Key Players list will be expanded to include 20 leaseholders	November 2008
Widening tenant choice	The Council will widen tenant choice with all services	March 2009

Issue	Action	Target completion date
Training	An annual programme of training opportunities will be drawn up every year with at least 4 different subject areas	January 2010
Training	Training on disabilities and the needs of tenants with disabilities will be offered to both tenants and staff	December 2008
Community Development Worker	Tenants will be involved in the appointment of the new Community Development Worker	May 2008
Service Planning Day	Two members from the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel and four tenants from the Key Players list will be invited to the Service Planning Day	Ongoing for each Service Planning Day
Housing Service documents	Staff will ensure that tenants are involved from pre-drafting to completion in drafting all documents	April 2008
Complaints	The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel will draw up a model for dealing with complaints regarding involvement	June 2008
Complaints	The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel will receive a half yearly report of all complaints about the Housing Service including details of service improvements made as a result	June 2008
Monitoring the Agreement	The Monitoring Panel will meet during the year to highlight achievements, identify failings, challenge progress and update the action plan	April 2008
Monitoring the Agreement	The full agreement will be reviewed, updated and reissued within 3 years	March 2011

www.eastdevon.gov.uk