



# Handbook

**Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group**

*All you need to know about your DDTCG membership*



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## Contact

**Name:** Beth Becks  
**Role:** Tenant Engagement and Continuous Improvement Officer  
**Email:** [beth.becks@dover.gov.uk](mailto:beth.becks@dover.gov.uk) / [tenantinvolvement@dover.gov.uk](mailto:tenantinvolvement@dover.gov.uk)  
**Telephone:** 01304 872406

Date: June 2024

# 1. Terms of Reference



## For Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group

### 1. Role of the Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group

- a. The aim of the Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group (DDTCG) is to work with Dover District Council (DDC), tenants and leaseholders to resolve local community issues, to support local community projects and to oversee estate improvements. To act as a consultative group to provide feedback for the Housing service with the aim of improvements with tenants in mind.
- b. The Dover District Tenants' Consultative Groups will carry the following functions in meeting the above aim:
  - Provide feedback and make recommendations regarding the Council's housing related policies and strategies.
  - Raise local & community issues, not individuals' issues, with DDC on behalf of tenants and leaseholders and recommend solutions.
  - Scrutinise the service provided by using performance and research-based approaches, in view to make recommendations for service improvements.
  - Support and/or promote community projects which benefit DDC tenants and leaseholders.

### 2. Membership

#### a. Numbers and composition

DDTCG will have a maximum of twelve members. Each of these members will have voting rights, unless otherwise stated.

#### b. Membership criteria

DDTCG members should be a tenant or leaseholder of DDC. A Group can involve one 'independent' member; this will be someone who has an interest in the area/local community and/or someone who can bring additional, relevant skills or knowledge to support the work of the Group. However, it should be noted that expenses will not be payable to 'independent' members, nor will they have voting rights.

#### c. Restrictions on membership

The following will not be eligible for membership:

- Current councillors

- DDC Officers
- Any tenant who is in breach of their tenancy conditions or DDC has commenced possession proceedings
- Anyone who has an 'unspent' conviction (as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)
- Any resident who has committed a serious breach of the code of conduct
- Anyone who is unreasonably persistent or a vexatious complainant, as defined by the Housing Ombudsman
- Anyone who is motivated to join the Group to address their own personal grievances as they will not be acting in the benefit of their community.
- Only one member of any household will be able to be a member of the DDTCCG at any one time if full membership is reached.

**d. Non-voting members**

The following people will be invited to attend the DDTCCG's meetings but will not have voting rights:

- Appropriate local councillor(s) will be invited to attend, participate and observe, in relation to local council services.
- Independent members (i.e. members who are not DDC tenants or leaseholders)

Invitations to attend will also be extended to DDC Officers, contractors and local businesses when their specific input is required. DDTCCG will write to invitees, setting out the date, time and venue for the meeting, the agenda and a description of the information the Group requires and the reasons the information is required.

**e. Length of membership**

There will be no limit on the length of time anyone can be a member of the DDTCCG.

**f. Sabbatical Opportunities**

There may be instances whereby members want to step back for a few meetings due to ill health or family circumstances. This is permitted if given the support of the DDTCCG.

If membership is at full capacity, it is the DDTCCG's discretion to decide to remove membership or grant the sabbatical.

If the member decides they do not wish or are unable to return, they must inform the Chair or TPO in the first instance.

**3. Selection of members**

- a.** The DDTCCG members, along with support from DDC, will carry out periodic publicity campaigns to help attract new members. Publicity methods may include, but not limited to, promoting

membership of the DDTCCG through community events/consultation and promotional information. DDTCCG will also be required to carry out their own promotional activities to attract new members.

- b. Anyone interested in joining a Group should attend 2 consecutive meetings, to help them and the Group to assess whether involvement in the DDTCCG is right for the interested person. After the second meeting, the DDTCCG will decide, by means of a vote, whether the interested person should be invited to become a member. Anyone who is chosen to become a member of a Group must meet the eligibility criteria set out in 2.c. above.

#### **4. Roles and selection**

- a. The DDTCCG will have a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary as a minimum.
- b. If the DDTCCG are directly managing funds, they should appoint a treasurer.
- c. Nominations will be sought for each role, each year. (Secret) Ballots will be held to select the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary (and the Treasurer if applicable). The ballot will be held at the AGM.
- d. Nominations will be accepted from tenants and/or leaseholders and no one person will hold more than one role within the committee.
- e. Groups can choose to have other positions, if these are deemed essential to the running of the Group, and to select a member to take up these positions using the selection process mentioned above in 4c.

#### **5. Meetings**

##### **a. Agenda items**

The DDTCCG will consider the following items on a regular basis:

- Local issues – each Group will work in partnership with DDC and the local council to resolve local issues. However, if the DDTCCG is unable to resolve an issue despite repeated attempts (i.e. an issue is raised at two consecutive meetings and remains unresolved), the Group will escalate their concerns to the Portfolio Holder or appropriate councillor member.
- Local Council consultations regarding housing related policies and strategies
- Community Projects
- Feedback from Focus Groups and Task and Finish/Project Groups – DDTCCG representatives who are members of the other groups should provide feedback from the meetings.

A summary or round up of the Task and Finish/Project Group activities will be given to the DDTCG.

- Monitor feedback from estate inspections, accompanied by action plans to address issues identified.

**b. Frequency**

The DDTCG will meet every 6 weeks.

Agreements of dates will be made in collaboration between the TPO and the Chair. Moving the dates one week either side of 6 weeks is permitted in the event of major sickness, bank holiday or office closure or other clash which is deemed necessary in agreement with all parties.

**c. Quorum**

DDTCG will be quorate when three quarters of the members (e.g. 8 out of 12) are present. Wherever possible, the Group should reach a consensus when making recommendations. If a vote is taken, a simple majority is required to ratify a decision. In the case of a tie, the chair person will have a casting vote.

**d. AGM**

DDTCG will hold an AGM each year. The purpose of the meeting will be as follows:

- To elect chair, vice chair, secretary (and treasurer and any other positions, if applicable)
- To provide a report about the Group's activities and outcomes in the previous year

Local DDC tenants and leaseholders, councillors, DDC Board members and officers will be invited to attend the AGMs.

**6. DDTCG Independence**

**a.** The DDTCG will take responsibility for the following activities:

- Setting the agendas for their meetings
- Take minutes of the Group's meetings, with support and training from DDC
- TEO to send invitations to officers, councillors or any other persons that the Group need in order to deal/respond to issues on their agenda.
- Send meeting agendas and minutes to DDC for distribution.

**b.** Support and promote the opportunity to carry out tenant surveys, in partnership with DDC, about repairs, grounds maintenance, etc, and to use this information to feedback to local contract meetings

**c.** To help Groups to operate effectively, DDC will provide up to date information, for example, regarding improvement and planned

maintenance programmes and about the contracts for services in their district.

## **7. Dealing with items not covered in the Terms of Reference**

The DDTCG's Terms of Reference will not cover all eventualities that may arise. Anything not covered will be dealt with by the DDTCG by way of a decision by majority vote of the members present. Any decision made will be a one off decision and may be considered by all DDTCGs for future inclusion in any review of the Terms of Reference.

### **Review process**

The DDTCG's Terms of Reference will be reviewed 1 year after it is implemented and then at least every three years thereafter, by the DDTCG members and officers working together.

### **Version Control**

Version 1: agreed 26/01/2021

Version 2: agreed 09/08/2022

Version 3: agreed 28/05/2024

*Date of next review: May 2027*

## 2. Role descriptions



### For Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group

#### Chairperson of Dover District Tenants' Group (DDTCG)

##### 1. Overview of the role

The role of the Chairperson is to ensure that:

- The DDTCG functions properly
- There is full participation at meetings
- Decisions are made efficiently and effectively and carried out

##### 2. Functioning of the Group

The Chairperson is responsible for the following specific tasks relating to the functioning of the DDTCG:

- To plan and run meetings in accordance with the Terms of Reference and code of conduct
- To ensure matters are dealt with in an orderly and efficient manner
- To facilitate change and address conflict within the DDTCG
- To plan for recruitment of members

##### 3. Represent the Group

The Chairperson will be expected to:

- Communicate effectively the vision and purpose of the DDTCG
- Advocate for and represent the DDTCG at meetings with external agencies
- Submit funding bids on behalf of the DDTCG

##### 4. Chairing meetings

During a meeting, the Chairperson should:

- Welcome everyone and request details of any apologies received
- Ensure the agenda is followed, including managing the time available for the meeting
- Bring impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision making
- Ensure that there is full participation at the meetings and facilitate, not dominate, the discussions taking place
- If a vote is carried out at a meeting, and there is no conclusive outcome, the Chairperson will have the casting vote

##### 5. Qualities and abilities required

The Chairperson will require the following key qualities and skills:



- Good leadership skills
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- A commitment to equality and diversity
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- Ability to ensure decisions are taken and followed up
- Good time keeping and attendance
- Tact and diplomacy
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the Group
- A commitment to personal development

**6. Time commitment**

The role of Chairperson requires an estimated time commitment of 1-2 hours per week. This may fluctuate.

**Vice-Chairperson of Dover District Tenants' Group (DDTCG)**

**Duties of the Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson will:

- a) Support the Chairperson in preparing for and managing meetings
- b) Deputise for the Chairperson when they are unavailable to prepare for, attend and chair meetings
- c) The Vice Chair will deputise for the Chair in representing the DDTCG, when required
- d) To support the chairperson in ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the DDTCG, in line with its Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

**1. Qualities and abilities**

The Vice Chairperson will have the following abilities and qualities, or have the potential to develop these abilities and qualities with support from the Chairperson and with training:

- a) Good leadership skills
- b) Good communication and interpersonal skills
- c) A commitment to equality and diversity
- d) Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- e) Ability to ensure decisions are taken and followed up
- f) Good time keeping and attendance
- g) Tact and diplomacy
- h) Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the Group
- i) A commitment to personal development

## **Secretary of Dover District Tenants' Group (DDTCG)**

### **1. Duties of the Secretary**

The Secretary shall perform the following duties:

- a) Receive and forward correspondence to the relevant member(s) of the Group
- b) Assist the Chairperson in arranging meetings, including the Annual General Meeting. This will include agree meeting venues and invitation with DDC. DDC to circulate invitations
- c) Record apologies received in advance of each Group meeting and report such apologies at the meeting
- d) Take minutes of each of the Group's meetings
- e) Checking and agreeing the meeting minutes with Chair and DDC prior to circulation
- f) Provide minutes from each DDTCG meeting in advance of the next meeting in a timely manner for DDC to circulate
- g) Keep accurate, up to date membership records

### **2. Qualities and abilities required**

- a) Good organisational and planning skills
- b) Good literacy skills
- c) Good digital skills, able to send and receive emails and write minutes on a computer
- d) Ability to set up and maintain records

### 3. Code of conduct

For all Tenant Engagement activities

Tenants and Leaseholders of Dover District Council (DDC) are expected to adhere to this code of conduct within their role as an involved tenant, this is including but not limited to:

- Any physical meeting at the Council Offices or official venue.
- Any online meeting, taking place via the internet.
- On DDC estates in an official capacity such as an estate inspection.
- Whilst conducting any activity on behalf of the group, such as garden competition judging, training or any arranged activity that may or may not take place as a formal meeting.

#### 1) General conduct

Tenants and leaseholders are expected to:

- a. behave in a manner that will not cause offence to others
- b. not use abusive or offensive language
- c. not seek preferential treatment for themselves, friends or relatives
- d. support tenants and leaseholders who are new to resident involvement and make them feel welcome
- e. make decisions in an efficient, fair and responsible way
- f. refer any resident who contacts them with a neighbour dispute or complaint to DDC. You may provide the resident with the correct contact information and support them to make their complaint.
- g. not to use social media to make personal, discriminatory, or political statements or comments about DDC, Staff, Residents, Councillors or other members of the group.
- h. not to use unhelpful or personal criticism towards DDC or their contractors
- i. show respect to other involved residents and DDC officers and their representatives
- j. abide by the code of conduct when taking part in any activities with or on behalf of DDC or on behalf of Local Groups recognised by DDC
- k. not to publicly discuss issues raised at meetings, before the minutes have been agreed and issued
- l. be an example to other tenants and abide by their own tenancy conditions (must not perpetrate ASB, neighbour nuisance, serious and sustained rent arrears, amongst others)

#### 2) Conduct at meetings and other formal involvement activities (both online and in person)

All who attend meetings and other formal involvement activities are expected to:

- a. support and respect the Chair

- b. arrive on time for meetings, or, if late, enter the meeting quietly so as not to disrupt the meeting.
- c. follow the agenda and help the Chair to keep to time
- d. indicate to the Chair when they wish to contribute to a debate or comment on any agenda item and wait for the Chair to indicate it is their turn to speak
- e. place mobile phones on silent and do not use during the meeting. If you wish to answer your phone, please leave the room to answer it. This applies to all who attend meetings e.g. it also includes officers and visitors. It also includes not using tablets and phones to check messages and emails during meetings, unless the chair of the meeting has given consent to do so.
- f. ensure you are appropriately dressed including when in online meetings. For example, ensure you are wearing something you would be comfortable wearing at a meeting in person.
- g. not interrupt or speak over someone who is already talking
- h. not to hold separate conversations whilst meetings are in progress and whilst other members of the meeting are addressing the group
- i. listen to others and respect their views and allow open discussion
- j. not raise political views or personal issues, unless personal experience is relevant and would add weight and clarity to the agenda item.
- k. disclose if they have a personal interest that may affect or influence a discussion or decision and not participate in such discussions or decisions (it may be appropriate for the relevant person(s) be asked to leave the meeting while the matter is debated)
- l. not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, nor consume any during the involvement activity
- m. not speak or write on behalf of the group without prior agreement of the group. Make any correspondence sent on behalf of the group available to all members of the group prior to agreement.
- n. respect the decisions reached by the group/panel and refrain from raising again
- o. support new group/panel members to help them settle in

### **3) Confidentiality**

- a. DDC are committed to protecting users privacy for all users of their services.
- b. As a 'Data Controller' DDC must make sure that they respect users rights and follow the law. If you have any concerns or questions about how DDC look after personal information please email [dataprotection@dover.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@dover.gov.uk) or call 01304 872318.
- c. There may be times (such as garden competition, recruiting new members and procurement activities) when participating tenants and leaseholders have access to sensitive information this could include:
  - Personal information
  - Commercial information

- d. Tenants and leaseholders are expected to:
  - ensure all documents (including electronic versions) are kept secure. Confidential information will not appear in meeting minutes and sensitive documents will be clearly marked at such.
  - ensure safe disposal of all documents, including confidential information i.e all confidential information can be returned to DCC so that appropriate arrangements can be made.
  - respect others confidentiality, and don't mention specific cases which may lead to embarrassment or identification of an individual's circumstances.
- e. Breaking confidentiality may result in a breach of the Data Protection Act 1988 or Human Rights Act 1998 which may amount to a criminal offence.

#### **4) Equality**

- a. All those participating in any tenant involvement activity will not discriminate on any ground against other attendees, whether they are tenants, leaseholders, general public, councillors, council staff.
- b. All those who participate have the right to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, gender, marital status, age, sexuality, religion or any other matter which may cause people to be treated unfairly.
- c. Prejudice towards a person because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or because they are transgender is considered a hate crime.

#### **5) Breaches of the code of conduct**

##### **6.1 Dealing with Minor Breaches of the Code**

- a. Examples of a minor breach of the Code of Conduct will include (but will not be limited to) the following:
  - Being unhelpfully critical of others e.g. other involved residents, officers and contractors
  - Talking over other people repeatedly
  - Raising personal issues repeatedly in a meeting or during/ carrying out an organised activity
  - Repeatedly turning up for meetings but not contributing, despite having been given encouragement and support
- b. Anyone wishing to report a minor breach should do so within 10 working days of the incident occurring
- c. Where a minor breach of the code is identified, the Chair or DDC Officer will give a verbal warning.
- d. If the minor breach continues/is repeated, the following action will be taken
  - The Chair and appropriate DDC Officer will arrange for a private meeting with the individual concerned to discuss in more detail.
  - The Group will receive the findings for discussion.

- The Group will take a vote about the individual's continuing involvement.
- The outcome of the discussion and vote will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days.
- If the minor breach has been committed by the Chairperson or by a person who is not a member of a formal group, the DDC representative will take the above-mentioned action.

## **6.2 Dealing with Serious Breaches of the Code**

- a. Some examples of serious breaches of the code include (although this is not an exhaustive list):
  - Acting in a discriminatory manner
  - Appearing under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs/substances
 and Inappropriate behaviour such as harassment, bullying, intimidation
  - Persistent disregard of others and/ or rulings of the Chair or activity leader
  - Inappropriate use of social media
  - Breaching the confidentiality requirements
  - Use of inappropriate and/or offensive language
- b. Anyone wishing to report a major breach should do so within 10 working days of the incident occurring
- c. Should any of the above behaviours, in the opinion of the Chair or DDC Officer, happen during a meeting or involvement activity, the person concerned will be asked to leave the meeting/activity immediately. Following a report or observation of a serious breach of the Code, the DDC Officer and the Chair will arrange a private meeting with the person concerned to discuss the situation. The matter will be investigated and the Chair and DDC Officer will consider the type of further appropriate action, such as a final warning or exclusion from involvement activities.
- d. The decision to exclude from involvement activities may be 'permanent', if the serious breach of the code is severe, for example:
  - If the breach involves behaviour that is discriminatory, or behaviour that results in a complete breakdown in the trust between the panel member and other residents and/or staff.
  - If the breach involves bullying or intimidation carried out in writing e.g. by letter, email or using social media.

This decision will be confirmed in writing within 5 days of the decision.

- e. Instant dismissal and permanent removal from the group will happen in the following circumstances:
  - If the breach involves verbal or physical behaviour and/or bullying, and is witnessed by members of the group or DDC Officers.

- If physical violence is involved and witnessed by members of the group or DDC Officers.
- f. If an allegation of serious breach of the code is made against the Chair, the DDC Officer and Head of Housing will handle the matter.

**g. Raising concerns**

It may not always be practical or appropriate for a breach to be raised at a meeting e.g. if a member of a group is feeling intimidated or feels that they are not being given the chance to contribute effectively. Equally, a breach may occur outside of a meeting. In these circumstances, a resident should contact the Chair or an DDC officer at the earliest opportunity, and no longer than 10 working days after the incident occurs, and report the issue so that it can be dealt with quickly and effectively in line with the process outline above.

**h. Appeals to exclusions from involvement activity**

Any member excluded from involvement may appeal against the decision. To do so they should raise their appeal with DDC's Head of Housing within 7 working days of the final notice of the exclusion. The Head of Housing will consider the appeal within 7 working days and feedback with a decision, in writing within a further 7 working days. Residents who remain dissatisfied with the decision may at any point use the formal complaints process.

**Review process**

The Code of Conduct will be reviewed 1 year after it is implemented and then at least every three years thereafter, by engaged residents and DDC Officers working together.

**Version Control**

Version 1: agreed 26/01/2021

Version 2: agreed 09/08/2022

Version 3: agreed 28/05/2024

*Date of next review: May 2027*

**Contact Officer:** Beth Becks, Tenant Engagement and Continuous Improvement Officer (01304 872406)

## 4. Jargon Buster

Wherever possible we will use plain English and avoid using jargon. However, there are lots of Housing specific terms or acronyms that are not familiar to you. The list below will help you understand most of the terms you may come across.

### **Affordable housing**

Affordable housing is housing built with subsidy from the Government, Housing Association or other means, either for rent, outright sale, or shared ownership. The subsidy enables the cost of rent/purchase to be affordable for households who cannot otherwise afford the market rent/sale price in the area.

### **Annual general meeting (AGM)**

This is held by an organisation or group, such as the Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group, about the same time every year. At the meeting annual reports are presented and new roles are elected.

### **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)**

This is behaviour which goes against what is generally acceptable to society. This can include criminal acts as well as less serious behaviour such as general un-neighbourly behaviour.

### **Asset Management**

The systematic process for operating, maintaining and upgrading the housing stock in a cost-effective way to maximise, financial returns, minimise financial risk and to meet the needs of customers.

### **Assignment**

A landlord and tenant agree that a friend or a relative can take over the tenancy.

### **Assured tenancies**

Since January 1989 all new tenants of housing associations and private landlords have assured tenancies. Their rights are slightly different from secure tenants. Dover District Council do not have any Assured Tenancies.

### **Ballot**

The way support for an option is decided. Before a ballot tenants receive detailed information about what they are being asked to vote on.

### **Bedroom Tax**

Also known as the 'spare room subsidy' or 'under-occupation penalty', it is a change to Housing Benefit entitlement that means housing benefits in social housing will be reduced if you live in a property that is deemed to be under-occupied. If you have one spare room, your benefit will be cut by 14% and by 25% for two or more spare rooms.

### **Benchmarks**

Performance levels used for comparison. For example, we might look at how quickly another organisation does repairs and compare this with our performance.

### **BAME**

Black and Minority Ethnic, a term often used to describe minority groups recognised



as falling under the Race Relations Act 1976. (This Act is superseded by the Equality Act 2010).

### **Business Plan**

This is a document setting out an organisation's plans for future operation, providing strategic and financial projections.

### **Choice based lettings (CBL)**

The method used to let vacant properties. The properties are managed or owned by councils or Housing Associations. Dover District Council use 'Kent Home Choice' on the 'Huume' computer system.

### **Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)**

This is the representative body for housing professionals.

### **Decant**

Where tenants are temporarily moved out of their homes to another property so work can be carried out to their house.

### **Decent Homes Standard**

Standard set out by the Government in a Public Service Agreement for the minimum quality of local authority housing. Local councils should have met this standard by 2010.

### **Demoted tenancies**

Demoted tenancies are very similar to introductory tenancies. They give you limited rights and less protection from eviction than a secure tenancy.

### **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)**

DLUHC is a department of the Government responsible for housing, communities, local government in England and the levelling up policy.

### **Disturbance payments**

Payments made by a council/housing organisation to cover the costs of moving home because of decant, or permanent re-housing under a demolition scheme.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The promotion of equality of opportunity for all, giving every individual the chance to achieve their potential, free from prejudice and discrimination. It is also about valuing people's differences and understanding that we must provide our services in different ways to suit different customers.

### **Floating Support**

Floating support is often used to support people living in their own home in short-term periods of difficulty and can cover a range of issues, tailored to individual needs.

### **Former Tenant Arrears (FTA)**

Money still owed by people who have left or abandoned their tenancies

### **General Fund (GF)**

The council account into which customers' Council Tax is paid. It is local council money that is outside the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

### **General Needs**

General needs housing refers to houses, bungalows and flats. General needs housing doesn't include support services as part of the tenancy.

### **Homeloss payment**

This is compensation payable by law to a tenant or owner when moved permanently as a result of council/RP development activity. It is in addition to disturbance payments.

### **Household Member**

DDC refer to a person as a Household Member when they reside in a DDC property but are not named on the tenancy.

### **Housing Association**

A non-profit making organisation that provides social housing for rent.

### **Housing Benefit**

A means tested welfare benefit administered by the local authority providing eligible resident's assistance in meeting the cost of rent. All tenants, Council, Housing Association or private, are eligible to apply. How much help anyone receives depends on their income and other circumstances such as whether they're already claiming housing element of Universal Credit. See [www.gov.uk/housing-benefit](http://www.gov.uk/housing-benefit)

### **Housing Ombudsman**

The Ombudsman can investigate complaints and other matters referred to them and make recommendations for action. They are independent of the people and organisations they investigate.

### **Housing Stock**

We sometimes refer to our houses and flats as stock. Particularly if they are being referred to as a whole.

### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

This is a council account into which rents and any money for council housing from the Government are paid. This account is ringfenced and can only be spent on the provision of Social Housing.

### **Information and Communication technology (ICT)**

A term used to encompass all forms of computing systems, telecommunications and networks.

### **Independent Living**

Accommodation for the over 55's. 'Schemes' are the blocks which have self-contained studio, 1 bed or 2 bed flats with lifeline pull cords. Every scheme has an Independent Living Manager who provides housing related support.

### **Introductory tenancies**

The Housing Act 1996 allowed councils to offer introductory tenancies to new tenants. These last for a year and then become secure tenancies unless the tenants break their tenancy agreement.

### **Leaseholder**

In council housing, this means a person who has bought their home but on leasehold because it is part of a block of flats or maisonettes.

### **Lettings policy**

This sets down the rules of how a council decides who gets offered a home first. The council has a responsibility to give priority to those in housing need.

### **Major repairs**

Replacement of life-expired major components of a property (eg. roof, windows, kitchens, bathrooms). Usually planned in advance, also referred to as Planned Maintenance. Tenants are consulted on this work.

### **Mutual Exchange**

A tenant's right, under certain conditions, to exchange his/her tenancy with the tenant of the same landlord or another public sector landlord.

### **Performance indicators (PIs)**

Registered Providers must publish how they are doing in relation to a number of important housing tasks. These are known as performance indicators.

### **Planned maintenance**

See Major repairs (above)

### **Quorum**

The minimum number of members an organisation needs at any meeting to make decisions, as laid down in its constitution.

### **Registered Provider**

A registered provider is a provider of social housing, or landlord, such as a Housing Association or Local Authority who are registered as such with the Regulator of Social Housing.

### **Regulator of Social Housing**

The Regulator of Social Housing regulates registered social housing providers including local authorities and housing associations. It is a stand alone non departmental public body of government.

The Regulator of Social Housing sets consumer and economic standards for social housing providers and can take action if these are breached.

### **Regulatory Standards**

The standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing which sets out the outcomes that social landlords must deliver for tenants. These include the consumer standards and economic standards.

### **Risk Management**

A method of identifying, assessing and monitoring risks in a way that enables an organisation to minimise losses and maximise opportunities.

### **Service Charges**

The money leaseholders pay for services such as caretakers, common rooms and cleaning, lighting and maintenance of common parts and gardening.

### **Shared Ownership**

Shared ownership helps people who cannot afford the full cost of buying a home outright. With shared ownership you buy a share of your home and rent the rest.

### **Stakeholder**

A person, group, organisation, or system who affects or can be affected by an organisation's actions

### **Supported Housing**

Housing which has additional support services with it for the residents.

### **Tenant**

Anyone who has a tenancy in their name with Dover District Council. These can be joint tenants or single tenants. A 'tenant' does not include a household member.

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

The new system requires all registered social housing providers to collect and report annually on their performance to ensure tenants receive greater transparency about how landlords are performing. The information must meet the regulator's requirements that are set out in the TSMs.

### Void

This is what DDC use to refer to an empty property.

### Void Costs

These are the costs associated with an empty property and can include the cost of repairs to that property or the rent loss from that property whilst it is empty.

## Initials and Acronyms

**AGM** Annual General Meeting

**ASB** Anti-Social Behaviour

**CE** Chief Executive

**CIH** Chartered Institute of Housing

**CSE** Customer Service Excellence

**CSS** Customer Service Standards

**DBS** Disclosure and Barring Service  
– formally CRB

**DDC** Dover District Council

**DLUHC** Department of Leveling up,  
Homes and Communities

**E&D** Equality & Diversity

**EHRC** Equality and Human rights  
Commission

**H&S** Health & Safety

**HA** Housing Association

**HB** Housing Benefit

**LA** Local Authority

**MD** Managing Director

**NHF** National Housing Federation

**PCT** Primary Care Trust

**PSL** Private Sector Leasing

**QAF** Quality Assessment Framework

**RAG** Red Amber Green

**RP** Registered Provider

**RSH** Regulator of Social Housing

**SP** Supporting People

**SPG** Supporting People Grant

**TPAS** Tenant Participation Advisory  
Service

**TSMs** Tenant Satisfaction Measures

**YTD** Year to date

## 5. Useful Information

### Links

TPAS	<a href="http://www.tpas.org.uk">www.tpas.org.uk</a>
DDC Housing website	<a href="http://www.dover.gov.uk/Housing/Housing-for-Tenants/Home.aspx">www.dover.gov.uk/Housing/Housing-for-Tenants/Home.aspx</a>
Chartered Institute of Housing	<a href="http://www.cih.org">www.cih.org</a>
Regulatory Standards	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords</a>
Reshaping Consumer Regulation Policy Paper	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reshaping-consumer-regulation-our-implementation-plan/reshaping-consumer-regulation-our-implementation-plan">www.gov.uk/government/publications/reshaping-consumer-regulation-our-implementation-plan/reshaping-consumer-regulation-our-implementation-plan</a>

### TPAS

We have joined Tenant Participation & Advisory Service (TPAS), a not-for-profit organisation that promotes, supports and champions tenant involvement. We use it primarily to provide training and knowledge opportunities for Tenants on our Panels.

As a result, DDC are now searchable and listed on TPAS' website. You are able to use this membership and sign up to access free training, advice and resources.

Join here using this link: <https://www.tpas.org.uk/landlord/employee/create-member/402>