



**ASHFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**urbanfox**  
consultancy

## **Ashford Tenant Compact 2007**

**A strategy for involving residents**

## Executive Summary

This document tracks and records the 2007 review of the Borough's strategy for involving tenants and leaseholders in the way it plans and delivers housing services.

At a time of increasing national and local commitment to ensuring that residents are driving up standards and service delivery, this review was important in mapping out how well we had done on the journey so far, what we need to focus on in the medium term to move towards our shared vision (and the Council's Housing Strategy 2007-2010) and what skills we need to have in place to achieve these.

The key objectives we have agreed will enable us to:

- continue to grow the partnership between Tenants, Councillors and Council Officers
- cement tenant choice and influence at the heart of our services
- explore ways of involving as many people as possible in shaping services
- identify the resources and means to grow skills and enable informed debate
- plan ahead and think about our local neighbourhoods, environmental concerns and future lifestyles
- work jointly to do the right things at the right times
- focus on outcomes that provide better homes for the diverse urban and rural communities of Ashford

We have developed an action plan that will take us to 2009. It includes keeping up the momentum on the things that we already do well, working hard to communicate better and involve more people, maintaining our work on improving estates and looking ahead to ensure that we are good shape to meet new challenges.

We hope that we have got the balance right. There are contact details later in the report for you to tell us if we have or to talk to us about how you can get involved if you see anything in the report that inspires you.

Thank you for taking the time to read the report and please do let us know if we can improve services for you.

# 1. Introduction

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> review of the Borough's Tenant Compact since we introduced them in Year 2000. The Compact is effectively the Borough's Strategy for Involving Residents in the way it plans and delivers services. It supports and expresses the shared commitment of the Council and the Ashford Borough Tenants Forum to ensuring that services are tenant and leaseholder focussed and that a wide range of channels are in place to enable as many people as possible to contribute to and hear about the way the Council carries out its landlord function.

In planning the Review, the Council provided additional finances to enable the Forum to appoint an Independent Tenant Advisor to support the Forum. urbanfox consultancy, which had previously advised the Forum during the Housing Stock Options Appraisal and the Bybrook Area Plan, was appointed to bring project management skills and professional support to the Forum in their discussions with the Council.

The Review was built on the following framework:

- Agreeing a project plan
- Reviewing experience to date and capturing views from residents and others
- Reflecting on the Housing Strategy and reinforcing the alignment of the business plan and resident involvement
- Benchmarking Ashford performance against practice elsewhere
- Drafting and agreeing the 2007 Compact
- Communicating the new Compact

The main bulk of the work was completed between July 2007 and September 2007 when the draft Compact and Action Plan was presented to the Annual General Meeting of Ashford Borough Tenants Forum.

Once signed off, a summary of the Tenant Compact 2007 - 2009 will be distributed to residents with the Forum newsletter in Summer 2008.

At an early stage of the discussions it was agreed to pursue the production of a short DVD film by the Forum and the Council with the support of urbanfox. The aim was to improve the way the work of the Council and the Forum was presented and try to increase the level of interest in getting involved. At the time of drafting this report the production was continuing and is scheduled for distribution in early 2008.

The remainder of this report pulls together the work we did, summarises the comments, views and data that we collected and records the outcomes and the agreement on the way forward.

## 2. What we did

### 2.1 The Project Plan

The Plan was formed via a workshop style discussion on 11 July 2007 using a pre-contract plan submitted by urbanfox as a template. This was signed off on 18 July and confirmed a series of Forum meetings throughout the remainder of the summer specifically aimed at managing the Review of the Compact.

In addition to the two meetings above, the Forum met on 15, 22 & 29 August and on 3 October following the Forum AGM on 8 September. A meeting on 5 November provided the formal sign-off of the New Compact.

The format of the project meetings has been a combination of presentation, discussion and workshop.

### 2.2 Reviewing experience to date

There were four strands to this.

**Anecdotal evidence:** Views expressed and recorded from a variety of contacts during the progress of the Review. These included views of Forum Members, a number of Council Officers, people attending a programme of Community Safety Roadshow meetings and comments from film clips.

**Desk top study of previous opinion surveys:** This comprised the tracking of opinions and trends from the most recent Status Survey, the Stock Option Appraisal Survey and the base-line survey on Neighbourhood Quality of Life at Bybrook Road.

**Current Opinion on the Impact of Resident Engagement:** A study of opinions regarding the impact of resident involvement, influencing change, communications and the effectiveness of the Forum. The results of the survey are shown as Appendix A.

**Forum Distillation:** Identifying the trends from the data captured and building themes for later incorporation into the Compact and the Action Plan.

### 2.3 Reflection on the Housing Strategy and alignment with the Business Plan

Forum Members had been working with the Housing Department's Senior Managers to agree the latest review of the Strategy. This enabled informed debate on the direction of the Department's work and complemented the ongoing, quarterly meetings of the Forum to review the Business Plan.

As part of the programme of Compact Review project meetings, the Forum received a presentation of the key points of the Business Plan, a review of how that had been shaped by earlier consultations and some thoughts on future impacts. The slides from the presentation are shown as Appendix B.

The subsequent workshop provided opportunity to frame the issues into the 2007 Compact, as well as inform the Review process of the 2005 Compact (see below).

## **2.4 Review of the 2005 Tenant Compact**

The Forum reviewed the 2005 Compact via a detailed appraisal of the 2005 Action Plan. The review is shown as Appendix C. This work confirmed the overall progress that was reflected in the impact survey in 2.2 above. Over 80 percent of the detailed targets were achieved. This was acknowledged by the Forum and the relevant Council Officers as a strong performance given the programme of change that had been embarked upon (Housing Stock Options Appraisal, Stanhope PFI, additional resources for the Forum and other residents by way of training and facilities and ongoing Forum representation on various service planning and monitoring groups). The Review also identified those areas where additional focus was needed and these have been built into the 2007 Action Plan. These include:

- improving communications and increasing the number of people getting involved
- reaching “hard to reach” groups
- learning from the Area Plan pilots
- monitoring anti-social behaviour in a more structured way
- extending the ways residents can influence local initiatives

## **2.5 Benchmarking against Best Practice Elsewhere**

To complement the programme of visits to other residents groups and social landlords (already adding to improved performance e.g. the agreement to include the Forum Chair at all Senior Management Team Meetings) the Forum considered a list of positive practice identified by the Audit Commission during the course of its Inspection Programme from 2001 onwards. The list of Positive Practice in Tenant Engagement is attached as Appendix D.

The prompts enabled the Forum to discuss local practice and how this might be viewed in terms of exceeding regulatory standards. They compiled a list of local positive practice examples and this is shown as Appendix E.

## **2.6 The DVD**

It was agreed at the first project plan meeting that the Forum and the Council both wanted the 2007 Compact to have maximum exposure and impact. Following discussions where Members explored the ideas for different media and forms of presentation and there was a strong consensus to produce a film for distribution to residents and all key stakeholders.

The principles were that it should be polished, engaging informative and produced “locally”. urbanfox was asked to produce a possible “storyboard” and to explore production etc. costs and advise on the shape of the film and its messages.

The Forum viewed an example of a housing association promotional DVD and agreed to pursue the production of a film provided that it can be brought forward broadly in line with the costs of hard copy distribution.

Entitled “What’s in it for me?” considerable progress has now been made in producing the film. At the time of drafting this report the script has been written, the filming completed and the final editing is taking place with a view to printing and distribution in early 2008.

### **3. The 2007 Tenant Compact and Action Plan**

The 2007 Compact Action Plan, informed and framed by the sections above, are shown as Appendix F.

The key objectives of the Compact are to enable the Council and the Forum to:

- continue to grow the partnership between Tenants, Councillors and Council Officers
- cement tenant choice and influence at the heart of services
- explore ways of involving as many people as possible in shaping services
- identify the resources and means to grow skills and enable informed debate
- plan ahead and think about our local neighbourhoods, environmental concerns and future lifestyles
- work jointly to do the right things at the right times
- focus on outcomes that provide better homes for the diverse urban and rural communities of Ashford

## **If we get it wrong**

- If your complaint can be dealt with “on the spot” it will be, although this will not always be possible.
- If the problem is not resolved, you can complain either by letter or using a complaint form, to your Area Manager, or to your Head of Service. You can get help to put your complaint in writing from the Citizens’ Advice Bureau on 01233 626185.
- Your complaint should be acknowledged in three days, and you would get a full response, or be told of the reason why not in 15 working days.
- If you are still not satisfied you can complain to the Service Director, who will look independently at your complaint.
- You have the right to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman at Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP, or ring the Ombudsman Adviceline on 02079153210, or visit the web site at [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk).

## Appendix A

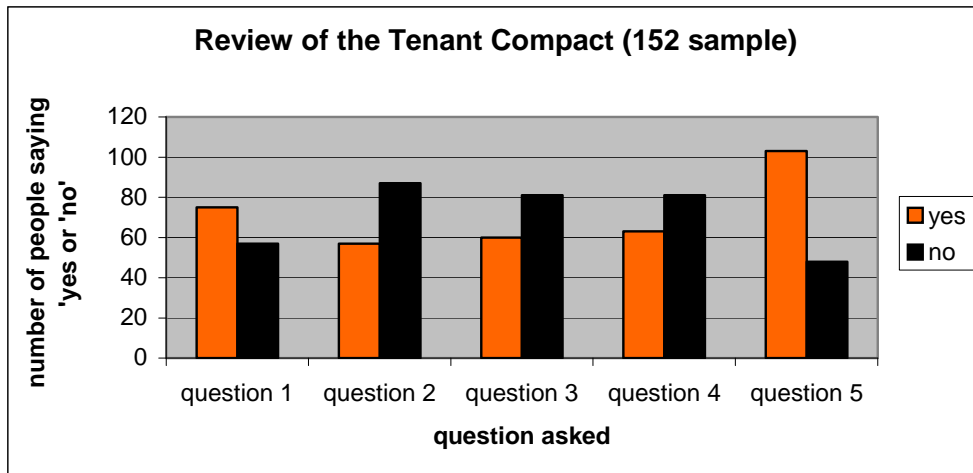
Question 1: Has tenant involvement improved the housing service?

Question 2: Do you feel that you have the opportunity to influence Council decisions?

Question 3: Do you feel that you have opportunity to influence decisions at a local level, for example on your estate or neighbourhood?

Question 4: When estate programmes change, do you feel that you get sufficient feedback from the Council about these changes?

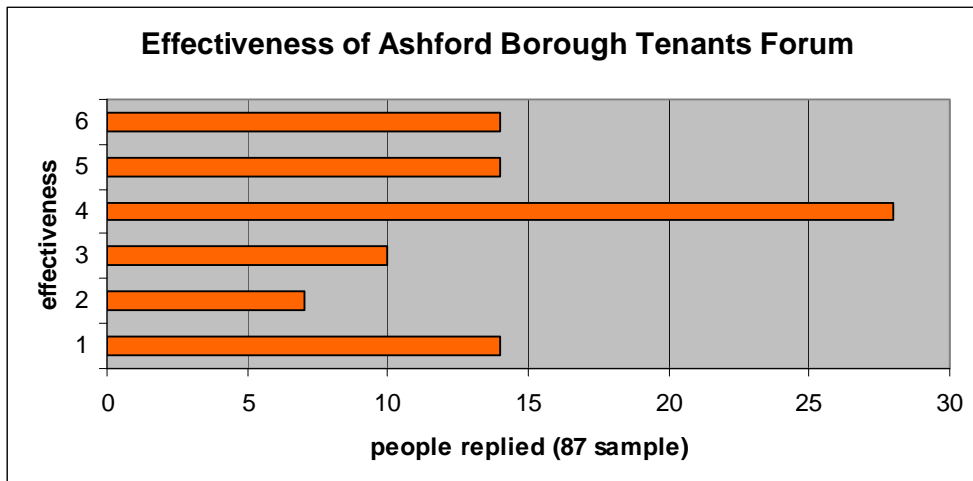
Question 5: Have you heard of the Ashford Borough Tenants Forum?



How effective has the Forum been in influencing Council services?

1 – not very effective

6 – very effective



# Appendix B



**HRA Business Planning and tenant involvement**

Presenter:  
Bob Smart  
August 2007

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The slide features a graphic of three overlapping leaves on the left, each containing a different image of a house. The Ashford Council logo is in the top right corner.



**Mission Statement**

*“Dedicated to providing decent sustainable homes and communities for all our tenants.”*

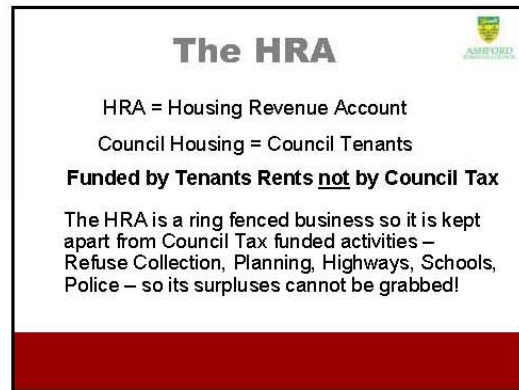
The slide features the Ashford Council logo in the top right corner.



**HRA Objectives**

1. Providing quality homes for all tenants – Decent Homes, Area Regeneration, PFI, Maint + Repairs
2. Promote community and involvement – estates man'gt, tenant involvement, CBL, older tenants,
3. Plan for the future – Business Plan, Training, IT solutions, Excellent CPA rating
4. Provide real value for money – benchmarking, performance management, surveys
5. Develop new business opportunities

The slide features the Ashford Council logo in the top right corner.



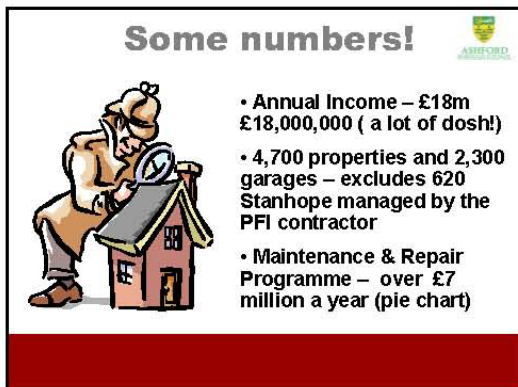
**The HRA**

HRA = Housing Revenue Account  
Council Housing = Council Tenants


**Funded by Tenants Rents not by Council Tax**

The HRA is a ring fenced business so it is kept apart from Council Tax funded activities – Refuse Collection, Planning, Highways, Schools, Police – so its surpluses cannot be grabbed!

The slide features the Ashford Council logo in the top right corner.




**Some numbers!**



- Annual Income – £18m  
£18,000,000 ( a lot of dosh!)
- 4,700 properties and 2,300 garages – excludes 620 Stanhope managed by the PFI contractor
- Maintenance & Repair Programme – over £7 million a year (pie chart)

The slide features the Ashford Council logo in the top right corner.




**So what is a Business Plan?**

It is basically about:

1. Where are we now
2. Where we want to be
3. How do we get there!

(An Action Plan + can we afford it!)



The slide features the Ashford Council logo in the top right corner.

## What is in a Business Plan?



- Top level document which sets the scene for the next 5 years
- Not about details – which properties will get a kitchen next year – its about overall objectives
- Once completed it does not sit on a shelf – financials are kept under review and action plan is kept up to date
- Performance and delivery highlighted

## Successful Business Plan – All about Delivery



- Have Decent Homes – one of the few, and can afford to maintain it
- PFI + Area Regeneration work progressing
- Financially strong and with a balanced/fully funded HRA Business Plan
- Performance is very good – supported by benchmarking – Quarterly reports, pie charts

## Tenant involvement to date MASSIVE!



- Option Appraisal – massive successful exercise
- Environmental improvements – Bybrook + Appledore
- Stanhope – massive tenant participation
- Workshop on BP objectives in Dec 2005 – resulted in new action plan
- IF YOU DO NOT THINK ANY OF THE TOP 3 WERE NOT MASSIVE – WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF YOU HAD SAID NO!

## Tenant involvement moving forward



“What’s in it for me!”

## What do I get for the money?



- What do I get now (and how does it compare with others)
- Service Improvements
- New Services
- Segmented service development – elderly, disabled, families.
- Community improvements

The end

## Appendix C

### Review of the Ashford BC 2005 Tenant Compact Action Plan

The following tables provide a summary review by Ashford Borough Tenants Forum of the outcomes of the 2005 Action Plan.

#### Letting our Homes

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Work with the Housing Options Monitoring Group to test understanding of existing and future lettings policies	Target met. Lettings Policy reviewed and homeless advice training for residents completed.	Initial 3 monthly meetings now extended to annual review.	Ongoing
Work with the Housing Options Monitoring Group to review Choice based lettings	Target met.	As above.	Ongoing

#### Looking after our Customers

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Provide pre and post lettings advice	Post letting visits introduced. New service standards established. "Welcome Bucket" introduced.	Target revised during the life of the plan. New target met.	Monitor
Opinion surveys via Housing Survey Monitoring Group	Status survey, stock option appraisals, Stanhope PFI, Area Plan pilot surveys. Target met		Monitor and extend as part of Area Plan and other occasional survey needs
Reach "hard to reach groups"	Stock option appraisal	Now working through Ashford Integration Project	Ongoing
Establish customer care charter via Housing Survey Monitoring Group	New service standards review completed with revised sub targets		Monitor

## Improving our Neighbourhoods

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Complete original programme of Area Plans	Completed		n/a
Identify and progress new Area Plan Strategy	Completed		n/a
Trial new approach to Area Plan pilots	Underway	Slippage in implementation but valuable lessons in specifying work and identifying environmental standards	Accelerate pilot programme

## Repairs

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Maintain regular meetings with the Repairs Monitoring Group	Met target	Influenced planned maintenance programmes	Ongoing
Communicate Four Year Planned Maintenance Plan to residents	Met target	Repairs Monitoring Group signed off the work	Repeat when new Plan due for renewal
Produce leaflets for Planned Maintenance Projects	Met target	Repairs Monitoring Group designed the leaflets	Repeat when necessary

## Planning for the Future

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Ensure that ABTF are able to influence Policy at every stage	Ongoing	ABTF Chair attends Senior Management Team meetings	Ongoing
Involve ABTF in the review of the Business Plan	Target met	Quarterly reviews	Ongoing
Support ABTF in the Stock Options Review	Target met	ABTF employed ITA and helped Ashford secure first "sign off" by GOSE in Kent	
Engage with tenants in Stanhope PFI	Target met	Residents involved at all stages including disrupted programme	Ongoing via new contractor monitoring arrangements

## Influencing the World We Live In

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Influence decisions on waste disposal	Target met via Area Plan pilot at Bybrook (additional recycling facilities and collection methods)	Tenant Conference themed around Cleaner, Safer, Greener Initiative	Ongoing in other Area Plans
Influence decisions at Ashford's Future	Slippage	Attendance at meetings and adequate information flows but limited success in influencing direction and debates	Ongoing

## Anti-social Behaviour

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Monitor progress	ASB training for tenants' representatives completed. Anti-social Behaviour Policy Monitoring Panel established. Independent monitoring panel for individual cases not established	Independent monitoring panel target revised and dropped due to resource needs	Ongoing via Monitoring Panel

## Money Matters

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Keep tenants informed regarding Rent Setting	Meetings with ABTF every February and August		Ongoing to 2010

## Helping Older People Achieve More

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Sheltered scheme budgets partly devolved for local improvements	Target met (£900 per scheme)		Ongoing
Computer training for older tenants	Target met	Additional programme planned	Ongoing
Evaluate 24 hour staff cover trial (to meet European Working Time Directive)	Trial over, system evaluated and new working arrangements in place	New seminars forum in place and looking to extend beyond sheltered schemes	Ongoing re new seminars forum

## Treating Everyone Equally

Target	Outcome	Comment	Take forward
Work with the Housing Survey Monitoring Group to address reported dissatisfaction levels on racial incidents	Ongoing	Originally worked with Hate Crime Forum. Now revamped to Diversity Forum	Ongoing
Develop Diversity Pack	Target met. Tenants trained and working with tenants from other Boroughs	£20000 secured from Innovation into Action grant. Work extended to liaison with Ashford Integration Project	Ongoing liaison

## Appendix D

### Positive Practice in Tenant Engagement – Audit Commission

The two listings below are typical examples available on the Audit Commission website. In the interest of paper conservation the full listing is not printed here but can be found at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing/positivepracticedata](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing/positivepracticedata).

Title: Encouraging customer involvement through a 'Simple guide to getting involved' (Arms Length Management Organisation Inspection – Gateshead Housing Company (The) (24/11/2005))

Organisation: Gateshead Housing Company (The)

Type: ALMOR Region: North East

J1: Good J2: Promising

Categories: K5 Resident involvement; K30 Access and customer care;

Summary: This gives information for customers on a menu of over 30 involvement activities, covering everything from being a board member to reading the company newspaper, ensuring that people can engage at the level with which they feel comfortable. It was developed with a representative group of customers and includes a user friendly key, with clear symbols to indicate the time required for each activity and the level of influence it has on the decision making process. It also includes details of support mechanisms in place to ensure involvement activities are accessible and inclusive. The document is produced in an attractive style aimed at a wide readership, particularly amongst younger people. It is available in numerous formats including large print, Braille, audio and in local community languages. It was supplied to all existing tenants and leaseholders with the quarterly newspaper, is available on the company website and is used at community events as a promotional tool to encourage involvement. NB 'A Simple Guide to Getting Involved' can be found on [www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/gettinginvolved](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/gettinginvolved).

Title: Monitoring performance using tenant inspectors (Inspection report – Rochdale MBC – Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (19/05/2005))

Organisation: Rochdale Boroughwide Housing

Type: ALMOR Region: North West

J1: Good J2: Promising

Categories: K5 Resident involvement;

Summary: Tenant Inspectors monitor performance against an agreed minimum letting standard through regular inspections, with outcomes from inspections being analysed and reported back to area boards twice a year. The 'pool' of 30 tenant inspectors was established following a major consultation survey to find out what areas of service tenants were interested in getting involved in and their preferred method of participation, eg Inspection, focus groups and 'mystery shopping' exercises. RBH, in partnership with a number of other local housing organisations, have now extended the tenant inspection process further through the use of Peer Reviews. This involves tenant representatives from a number of different organisations teaming up together and comparing various service standards across each participating organisation. ND: Some brief information about tenant inspectors is available from [www.rbhousing.org.uk/information/currentconsultation.htm](http://www.rbhousing.org.uk/information/currentconsultation.htm)

# Appendix E

## Review of the 2005 Tenant Compact

**The Action Plan from the 2005 Tenant Compact resulted in some positive practice examples.**

### **1. Stock Option Appraisal**

The first appraisal to be signed off in Kent. The Government Office of the South East acknowledged the strong performance in managing the appraisal with tenants at the heart of the process. The Stock Option Appraisal was supported by an Independent Tenant Adviser (ITA).

### **2. Stanhope Private Finance Initiative (PFI)**

Maximising the influence of residents over the proposals for the redevelopment and future management of Stanhope.

Empowering residents to appraise, monitor, and comment on progress the development of the PFI scheme on the estate. Residents were supported by an ITA.

### **3. Area Plan Pilots**

Based on outcome of Stock Options Appraisal, pilot to work through best practice on urban and rural locations.

### **4. Diversity Packs**

Developed in partnership with other South East Kent authorities and with an Innovation Into Action grant. Informal, games based structure used to increase understanding and reaching minority groups.

### **5. Service Planning and Monitoring Groups**

Input of Ashford Borough Tenants Forum (ABTF) Members in housing options, repairs and maintenance, research, and estate services monitoring groups. Supported by Tenant Participation Officer.

### **6. ABTF Resource Room**

Provision of meeting space, computer and other Information Technology equipment, email and internet access and printing facilities at Farrow Court.

## **7. Tenant Compact Review**

Review of tenant involvement arrangements and commitment. Agreement to different report format (DVD) to try to increase understanding of resident involvement and of the function of the compact. ITA supported.

## **8. Training Programme**

Range of funded training opportunities ranging from Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), management, choice based lettings, visits to other landlords, visits from other tenants groups, partnership working in South East Kent.

## **9. Newsletters**

Production of annual ABTF newsletter and "Ashford Back Chat" feedback system.

## **10. Tenant Participation Officer**

Ongoing support from dedicated officer and dedicated resources

## **11. Choice Based Lettings**

The Housing Options Monitoring Group were instrumental in the introduction of the Choice Based Lettings process and subsequent monitoring.

## **12. Post letting visits**

Post letting visits have been introduced with monitoring forms which are recorded and followed up, with the emphasis on encouraging participation

## **13. Influencing the Business Plan**

The ABTF receive quarterly reviews of the Housing Business Plan and have the opportunity to feedback on this.

**However some of the actions contained in the Action Plan did not happen and need to be carried forward to the new Compact**

1. Reaching "hard to reach" groups
2. Developing Housing Service Standards
3. Develop a workable approach to prioritising Area Plans
4. Influencing the world we live in
5. Monitoring Anti Social Behaviour

**These actions have been incorporated into the new Action Plan.**

The attached Action Plan provides the detail to these key objectives: how we will do what we say, by when and by whom

## Appendix F

Target	Task	Who	By when	With what	Milestones	Impact and cost assessment
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### Keeping The Momentum Going

Maintain the tenant input to Service Monitoring Groups	Include tenant and resident involvement in service working groups e.g. housing options, repairs, research, service standards reviews	All Housing Services Managers	As per meeting schedules with annual review dates	Minimal	Review of policy	Potential improvement to all parts of the Housing Service
High Level Input from Tenants to decision making at the Council	Chair of ABTF to attend Management Team meetings. ABTF to attend meetings of the Council Executive.	Head of Housing	As per meeting schedules	Minimal	Review of policy	Potential improvement to all parts of the Housing Service
Continue Joint Business Planning	ABTF to continue as a major stakeholder in HRA Business Planning	Resources Manager	Quarterly performance meetings and annual reviews	Minimal	Review of Business Plan	Increased understanding of value issues

<b>Target</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>With what</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Impact and cost assessment</b>
Extend influence of ABTF among other stakeholders e.g. Council Departments, Parish Councils, Councillors etc	Produce material to promote the achievements of ABTF and Tenant Participation to date	Chair of ABTF supported by Tenant Participation Officer	June 2008	Existing resources	Compact Review DVD plus summary	Raised awareness of Resident Involvement
Maintain watching brief on national and regional policy	Track housing policy relating to services and tenant involvement	ABTF supported by Tenant Participation Officer	Standing Item at ABTF monthly meetings	Minimal	Chair and Vice Chair of ABTF on national C&LG tenant's panel	Achieve best practice in Resident Involvement
Measure performance of the Housing Service in relation to resident involvement	Work with other Kent Authorities through the South East Kent Tenant Participation Forum to create local performance indicators	Tenant Participation Officer	February 2009	Existing resources	Monitor progress of Housemark project to agree national performance indicators for resident involvement and adapt for local circumstances	Measureable resident involvement
Area Plan Pilot	Review the pilot projects at Bybrook and Appledore and recommend future formats for regeneration and estate improvement	Housing Services Manager	September 2008	Existing resources	Identify ways to accelerate progress and best practice in project management	Improvement to residents homes and neighbourhoods

<b>Target</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>With what</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Impact and cost assessment</b>
Identifying Area Plan Programme	Introduce a project form for residents to nominate projects supported by respective Area Manager.	Project Manager	January 2008	Existing budgets	Prioritising currently done by Project Manager - train Forum to take over	Improve transparency
Improve information flows	Increasing Tenant satisfaction with communications. Ongoing – target is to be in the top quartile of performers when the next Status Survey is undertaken	Housing Service Managers	June 2009 with interim periodic reviews	Existing budgets	See Communication below	Improved relationship between Landlord and Tenant

### **Communications**

Review Communication Strategy & establish targeted communications action plan	Increase levels of satisfaction with opportunities to get involved. Secure top quartile performance	Housing Service Managers	June 2009	Existing resources	Review of 2005 Compact highlighted mixed satisfaction with communications	Improved relationship between Landlord and Tenant
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<b>Target</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>With what</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Impact and cost assessment</b>
Create a database of tenants and leaseholders willing to share their views of the Housing Service	Develop database of involved residents based on the tenant profile information being collated	Tenant Participation Officer	Bulk by June 2008 new tenants as arrive	Existing resources	Embedding and using Ashford Back Chat	Greatly increased number of involved residents
Develop consultation toolkit in conjunction with database	In order to maximise the benefits of the database, need to coordinate consultation within the service	Tenant Participation Officer	Draft test April 2008 - June 2008	Existing resources	Toolkit based on similar work carried out by West Berkshire Council	Improved consultation. Greater transparency
Ensure all Housing Polices are accessible to all	Carry out Equality Impact Assessments	Service Managers	September 08	Minimal	Signing off Equality Impact Assessments on strategies policies and procedures	Testing to ensure all customers receive a high level of service
Maximising the opportunity for all residents to have their say	Make meetings accessible to all. Offer a range of alternative methods of involvement	Tenant Participation Officer	Ongoing	Existing resources	Support existing and new groups. Carry out innovations such as joint door-knocking with Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's)	Ensuring the Housing Service reflects residents needs.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>With what</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Impact and cost assessment</b>
Review strategy for involving more hard to reach groups (1)	ABTF to support and promote the process of tenant profiling	ABTF Service Managers	Ongoing	Existing resources	Use Housing News, ABTF newsletter and incentives to maximise return	Enable service to be tailored to meet the needs of a diverse community
Review strategy for involving more hard to reach groups (2)	Extend joint working arrangements with Ashford Integration Project and specific client groups including Seniors Forum and young mothers	Chair of ABTF and Tenant Participation Officer	September 2008	Existing resources	Joint working groups and training. Set up surgeries in new Children Centres in Hothfield and Willesborough	Greater involvement of underrepresented groups
Useful Feedback show that ideas and improvements to the service made by tenants are implemented	Introduce the concept of "you said, we did" in the Housing News to demonstrate action	Tenant Participation Officer	December 2007	Minimal		

Target	Task	Who	By when	With what	Milestones	Impact and cost assessment
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### Growing Skills

Producing a Forum Development Plan	A Development Plan framed around key alignment with the Business Plan and Service Planning	Resource Manager and Tenant Participation Officer	September 2008	Existing resources	Training Needs Analysis. Complete plan when engaging with other Boroughs and Landlords	
Influencing the Environmental Agenda	Awareness Training for Tenants by way of resource pack	Tenant Participation Officer	February 2009	Existing resources	External resources to produce the pack and trial via estate events	
Quality and Control Monitoring (1)	Extend the estate walkabouts with more Tenants engaged	Housing Services Manager	Ongoing	Existing resources	Specific growth target to be agreed	Consistent approach to Estate Inspections
Quality and Control Monitoring (2)	Introduce Tenant Estate Inspectors	Housing Services Manager	July 2008	Existing resources	Training for volunteers	Consistent approach to Estate Inspections
Extend benchmarking against best practice in the sector	Annual Review of Best and Positive Performance	Chair of ABTF, Housing Services Manager	September 2008 and ongoing	Minimal	Benchmarking plan to include Audit Commission positive practice, exchanges with other landlords and peer groups	

Target	Task	Who	By when	With what	Milestones	Impact and cost assessment
Tenant Training	Carry out Training Needs Analysis. Offer training to wider tenant body not just ABTF	Tenant Participation Officer	June 2008	Existing resources	Offer wide choice and flexibility	

### Maintaining Estates

Reducing youth based low level crime	Exploration of more diversionary programmes for young people	Housing Services Team (Estates)	July 2008	Existing resources	Research into HRA funded programmes Involve other agencies Police Community Support Officers and Youth and Community	Improved community safety
Extending the environmental agenda	Involve ABTF in review of service standards relating to repairs and maintenance, estate cleaning and horticultural services	Relevant Housing Services Managers, ABTF	July 2008	Existing resources	Review of specifications, standards and materials choice	Achieve more sustainable communities
Reducing Anti-social Behaviour	Implement Block and Estate Agreements alongside Area Plans Use Community Safety Unit to gain intelligence and feed back	Housing Services Team (Estates)	Ongoing	Existing resources	Standing item at community group meetings	Stakeholder commitments to acceptable behaviours and service delivery. Better estates and communities

Target	Task	Who	By when	With what	Milestones	Impact and cost assessment
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**Going the 'Extra Mile'**

Establish a set of "stretch targets" to prepare for the 2009 Compact Review	Review service standards against positive and best practice elsewhere	Chair ABTF and Head of Housing Services	June 2009	Existing resources	Benchmarking, programme of visits to other landlords & tenants groups and collating service group discussions	Potential to improve Housing Service
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PD - Ashford Tenant Compact - May 08