

Resident Charter

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1 INTRODUCTION

Lewisham Council is required by government to set out how it will consult with its residents about its housing services and this was encompassed in Lewisham's Tenant Participation Compact, which was launched in October 2002.

In February 2003, central government launched the Communities Plan (Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future), which set out a long-term programme of action for delivering sustainable communities. Part of this plan was to ensure that all social housing (council and housing association) would be decent by 2010.

In 2005, Lewisham set out its strategy in how it would deliver decent homes responding to the high levels of investment required and the aspirations of tenants. Lewisham's Decent Homes Strategy included seven stock transfers, two Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and a borough-wide Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO).

Currently two transfers have been completed, Lewisham Park transferred to London & Quadrant in April 2007 and over 6000 homes in the south of Lewisham went to Phoenix Community Housing in December 2007. The other transfers are scheduled to be completed in 2008-09: Grove Park, Foreshore, Orchard Estate & Village Court, Lee & Excalibur.

Brockley PFI went live in September 2007. The other PFI project is Chrysalis, the viability of this carrying on as a PFI is looking uncertain and Council officers are working with residents to look at alternative options including stock transfer. The borough-wide ALMO, Lewisham Homes went live in January 2007, which manages the majority of Lewisham Council's homes.

The changes in how Lewisham Council's housing is managed has meant the need to revise the formal structures of resident involvement in the current Tenant Participation Compact so they are more appropriate and Lewisham Homes was delegated authority to conduct this piece of work. The result of the consultation undertaken by Lewisham Homes has resulted in the development of the Residents' Charter.

WHAT IS THE CHARTER FOR?

This Charter, like the Tenant Participation Compact, is an agreement made between Lewisham Council, its housing management providers and with you as residents. The housing management providers are Lewisham Homes, Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3. These organisations are responsible for delivering the promises made in this Charter.

In Lewisham, we are committed to working in partnership to ensure participation of residents is maximised, identifying areas for service improvement and addressing these together to find solutions. Lewisham Council and its housing management providers are signed up to and are full participants of the Charter.

The Charter provides the framework for Lewisham Council to:-

- Consult with residents about policy developments, legislation changes and new initiatives affecting their homes
- Elicit feedback from residents on the performance of their housing management provider
- Enable residents' to participate in decision making at all levels of the housing service, both locally and strategically

This Charter provides the framework for Lewisham Homes, Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3 to:-

- Learn from residents' experience to improve services
- Inform residents about possible choices in services
- Consult with residents in a variety of accessible ways on how we are developing
- Work with residents to develop services and policies that best meet the needs of residents and the community

The government requires local authorities to meet certain standards on resident involvement. This Charter meets the standards required by:-

- Providing details of the resources available for resident involvement
- Providing a variety of ways for residents to get involved
- Setting the standards that residents can expect for resident involvement
- Stating how the housing service is accountable to its customers, the residents

THE PARTNERS

Lewisham Homes

Lewisham Homes provides housing management and improvement works to residents of 12,000 tenanted and 4,500 leasehold homes across the borough, plus 4,500 additional properties that are managed on an interim basis pending the outcome of stock transfer ballots after which they may move to other investment vehicles. It is an independent company working at arms length from the Council but wholly owned by it. The Council remains the landlord of the properties managed by Lewisham Homes.

Dunlop Haywards

From January 2007 Dunlop Haywards has been providing housing management services to 2392 tenanted and 1156 leasehold homes across the 'Chrysalis' area, which is made up of estate and street properties across central Lewisham, Forest Hill and Sydenham.

Regenter B3

Regenter B3 is the management consortium for the Private Finance Initiative project covering 1344 tenanted and 503 leasehold homes in Brockley, which commenced in September 2007. Pinnacle provide the housing management services, Higgins Plc will be responsible for the refurbishment works and Equipe undertake the repairs and maintenance.

WHO DEVELOPED THE CHARTER?

The Residents' Charter was developed by a working group of residents. The group was made up of Lewisham Homes tenant and leasehold representatives who were nominated by existing housing panels; residents who were new to resident involvement and had expressed an interest in taking part; 2 Lewisham Homes Resident Board Members, including a representative from a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO); and Lewisham Homes' officers

Independent Tenant Advisers DOME supported the residents throughout the consultation on the Charter during 2006/7, including consultation:

- with Lewisham Homes Customer Panel
- through a survey of residents carried out by DOME and
- by a focus group drawn from a cross section of residents selected by DOME

2 THE CHARTER AIMS:

WHAT IS RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT FOR AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Resident involvement is crucial if we are to succeed in delivering constant improvement in the services we deliver, offering residents choice wherever possible and doing all that we can, together, to maintain (or create) neighbourhoods that people want to live in. In summary we want to:

- Provide a wide range of opportunities for **all** residents to be heard
- Increase the number of residents giving us feedback
- Increase satisfaction with your opportunities to influence the services you receive
- Ensure that residents influence plans for the future of your homes
- Increase how satisfied you are with the services you receive and the area that you live in

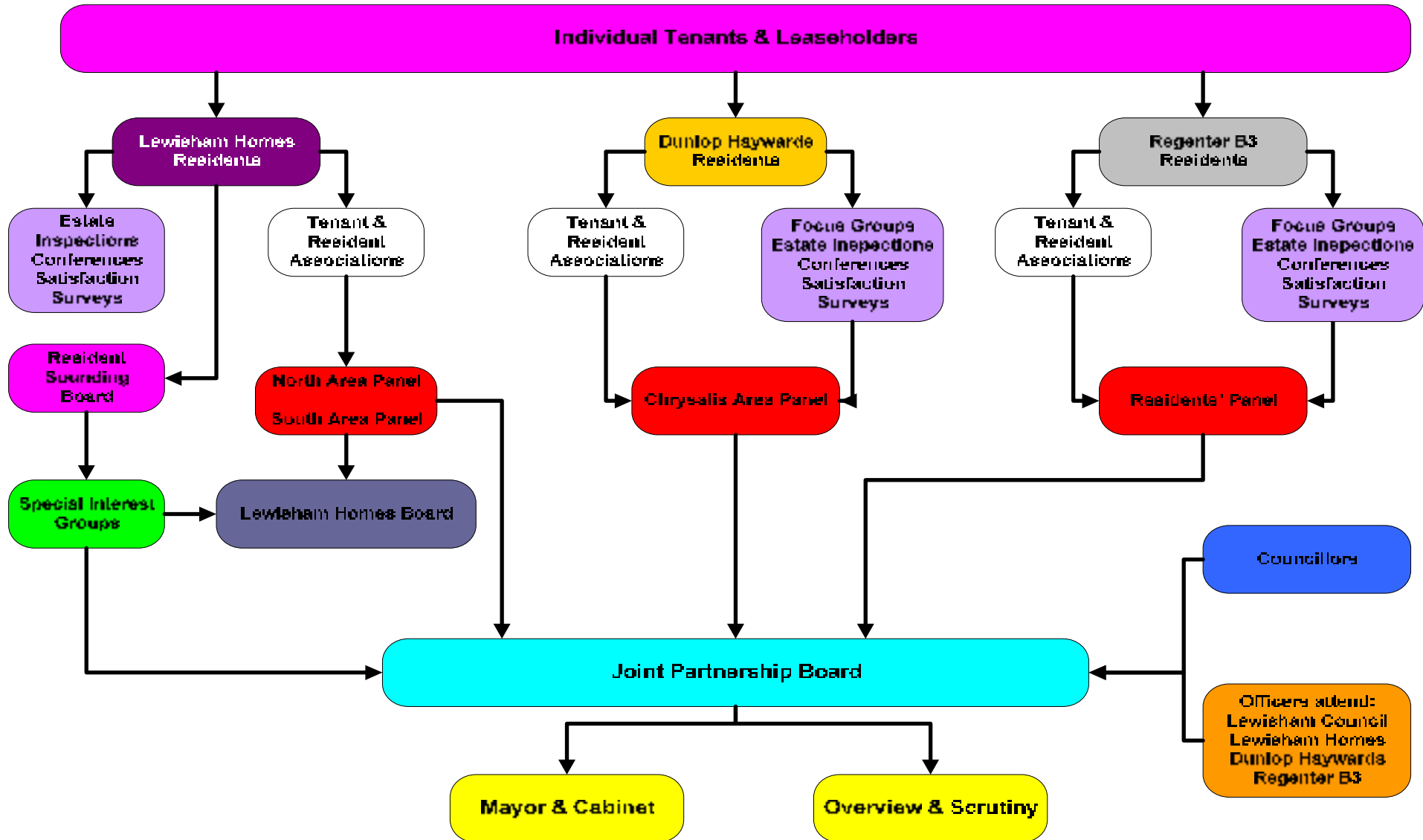
MAKING SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD

Lewisham Council has a diverse population with over 160 languages spoken and residents from many different cultures. Although the Charter provides a variety of routes and levels for involvement it is not enough just to offer these and wait. There are residents with whom there is little contact or involvement. Little is known about what they think of the services they receive, the difficulties they may have in accessing them, or what, if any, additional services would benefit their household. Therefore, each housing management provider, will seek out ways to provide opportunities for these households to raise their concerns and issues in a way they feel comfortable.

WAYS YOU CAN TAKE PART

The chart below shows how residents can chose how they want to be involved and at what level, whether it is on general issues, service delivery or local area concerns

Involvement Chart



3. OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

This Charter reflects the resident involvement mechanisms of each of the housing management providers and how these come together with the Joint Partnership Board. It offers residents a variety of ways to be involved in the management of your homes and to influence the way services are delivered.

Lewisham Council and its housing management providers aim to provide the flexibility that will fit your lifestyle and preferences, giving choice on topics, local involvement and special interests at a level decided by you as an individual resident. So whether you have a little time, as most of us do, or want to spend more time helping us to improve your services or local area, we welcome your involvement.

The different ways to get involve in the management of your homes are not fixed and the Council will like to see the Charter evolve to encourage greater and more flexible participation. Every year, the Charter will be reviewed to ensure it's meeting residents expectations.

The different resident involvement set ups of each housing management providers are detailed below.

3.1 Lewisham Homes Resident Consultation Structure

Lewisham Homes manages the majority of council homes in Lewisham, approximately 21,000 homes in all. This resident population in the Lewisham Homes area is very diverse and therefore their needs and circumstances will vary greatly.

By thoughtfully using the knowledge about their residents Lewisham Homes will contact members of what are often referred to as "harder to reach" groups, and investigate with them any barriers that prevent them being involved with the management of their home and the community in which they live.

To create an inclusive community and plan better for the future, Lewisham Homes has asked residents some questions about themselves and their households. By November 2007 Lewisham Homes has collected information on over 80% of Lewisham Homes residents and held details about age, disability, gender, ethnicity and household make up. From this, Lewisham Homes can identify those sections of the community where there is little involvement and those who may have difficulty in making their voice heard. Engaging younger residents and in particular younger people with disabilities and residents with learning difficulties is a particular challenge.

Lewisham Homes will:

- Contact and consult with faith and community groups that represent sections of our community
- Promote activities that bring cross sections of the community together
- Give a voice to younger residents using new technologies of text and e-mail
- Offer real benefits by identifying and creating training and employment opportunities for our residents with our contractors
- Offer incentives to younger residents to be involved in the care of their estate.

Lewisham Homes will tackle barriers by:

- Assisting with travel for residents who wish to attend events but have difficulty to use public transport
- Supporting residents so that you can make a confident contribution to proposals for change, including training, expenses and practical help
- Holding meetings in venues that provide disabled access and facilities
- Providing summaries of key documents in commonly used community languages
- Having summaries of key documents in audio and large print
- Providing key documents that are in plain English and avoid jargon
- Providing assistance to residents who are unable to attend events because of carer duties.

As an resident of Lewisham Homes you can choose to:

- Join the Resident Sounding board
- Join (or start) a Tenant and Resident Association (TRA)
- Join or start a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)
- Take part in estate inspections
- Feedback on major work projects in your area
- Join the Area Panel
- Stand for election to Lewisham Homes Board

What is the Resident Sounding Board?

Lewisham Homes residents who are interested in being involved can register the topics in which they are interested and the way they prefer to take part. These will be stored on a database and residents will be contacted and invited to take part in focus groups, surveys, special interest groups and e-mail discussion groups which will then be tailored to the preferences expressed by residents.

Any tenant or leaseholder can join the Resident Sounding Board. Lewisham Homes will promote membership-encouraging representation from all sections of the community.

As part of the Resident Sounding Board you can choose to involved form the following menu of activities by:

- **Completing surveys**
These are used to assess residents' satisfaction with particular services, identify gaps in services and improvements. Surveys can be carried out face to face or by post, e-mail or telephone
- **Taking part in Focus Groups**
These are usually discussion groups that meet for one session about a particular topic or issue. They often take place when a service is being reviewed or a new policy is being developed
- **Taking part in E-mail discussions**
These give the opportunity to residents to give their views and receive the views of other residents on particular topics without having to attend a

meeting, allowing each resident to choose when and how much they contribute.

- **Joining a Special Interest Group**

There will be a number of Special Interest Groups that any tenant or leaseholder can choose to join. The groups will hold meetings where they will set the work programme of the group, feed into Lewisham Homes Business Plan and review progress to date. The work programme may contain surveys and focus groups that include residents who are not members of the special interest group.

Special Interest Groups will elect members to the Joint Partnership Board. Any Lewisham Homes tenant or leaseholder is eligible to join the groups. Participation in groups can be by e-mail, by telephone or attendance at meetings. Examples of Special Interest Groups meeting in 2007/8 include a repairs forum, customer panel, communications group, leasehold issues group and a performance group. Information on these groups is shown below:

- **Repairs Forum**
Residents work alongside Lewisham Homes officers to shape and improve the repairs and maintenance service. Sub groups meet to discuss specific areas of the service, including day to day repairs, gas, voids and capital/planned works. Residents will be involved in deciding how to buy services and appoint contractors, for which training will be provided.
- **Customer Panel**
This group of residents were the ALMO steering group who helped establish the ALMO. They have continued meeting as an important resident consultative forum and have commented on changes in policy and practice including caretaking, new lettings procedures and the repairs service.
- **Communications Group**
Reviews publications, including the residents magazine 'Home', and standard letters produced by Lewisham Homes, commenting on the clarity and impact.
- **Leasehold Issues Group**
Considers issues that only affect leaseholders, for example financial assistance for leaseholders, new legislation and government initiatives affecting leaseholders.
- **Performance Group**
Carries out mystery shopping, exit and telephone surveys and resident led inspections. There will be specific training opportunities linked to the work of this group
- **Charter Monitoring Group**
Monitors how well the Charter is working, looking at inclusiveness, effectiveness and access to training and will include representatives from Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3. The group will report to the

Joint Partnership Board on the progress of the Charter and recommendations for change

What are Tenant & Resident Associations (TRAs)?

The purpose of a TRA is to give residents in a particular geographic area the opportunity to work together with Lewisham Homes and the Council to improve the community and built environment in which they live. The TRA will be aware of local and service issues and Lewisham Homes will work with them to find solutions and introduce local initiatives. To receive funding from Lewisham Tenants Fund see page 21, the association must be accredited. Details of accreditation criteria, including an example of a standard TRA constitution and code of conduct, are available from the Community Involvement Team who can be contacted on 020 8314 9267, email getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk.

An accredited TRA:

- Has an AGM and at least three open meetings per year.
- Has membership that is open to all tenants and leaseholders in the TRA's area.
- Has an elected committee to run the association.
- Has a constitution and code of conduct
- Elects members to the Area Panel (details of election and eligibility criteria are set out in the constitution)
- Actively seeks to follow the principles outlined in Lewisham Homes' equality and diversity policy.

Membership – is open to all Lewisham Homes residents in the area covered by the TRA. The time that you can give to a TRA can be very little – or as much as you decide to give.

What is a Tenant Management Organisation (TMOs)?

Lewisham Council supports Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) where there is interest from tenants and residents. The Housing (Right to Manage) Regulations allow residents to take over the management of their homes from the local authority. TMOs can choose to take all or part of the management functions such as caretaking, rent collection, repairs etc and receives management and maintenance allowances for the services it provides.

There are currently three TMOs in Lewisham – Lewisham Homes monitors the TMOs at Ewart Road in Forest Hill and Five Ways on Milton Court Estate. Excalibur in Catford is monitored by Lewisham Council. If you a Lewisham Homes resident and are interested in finding out more about forming a TMO contact their Community Involvement Team on;

Telephone: 020 8314 9267

Email: getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk.

If you are a resident being managed by Dunlop Haywards or Regenter B3, please contact Lewisham Council - the Strategic Housing team on 020 8314 8965.

What is an Estate Inspection?

Estate inspections will be carried out regularly in agreement with local groups, with more visits to estates where there are more issues to address and fewer to those with fewer issues. They look at the external areas of the estate and communal internal areas. The inspection covers the range of services provided to estates, including care-taking, grounds maintenance, repairs to common areas and cleaning. Dates for these inspections will be published on the Lewisham Homes website and locally. Residents are welcome to accompany officers and discuss any problem areas on the estates. In addition an invitation will be sent to the Chair and Vice – Chair of TRAs and ward councillors.

Feedback and actions taken as a result of the inspection will be sent to the TRA and other residents who attend the inspection. A summary of the results of estate inspections will be included in the quarterly residents' magazine, 'Home'

Feedback on Major Works on Estates

Where major works are to be carried out residents will be involved from the planning stage onwards. The standard of involvement for major works is set out on page 13.

What are Area Panels?

The two Area Panels in Lewisham Homes, the North and the South, bring together representatives from TRAs. These Area Panels correspond to the Lewisham Homes core management areas which deliver local services. They provide a forum for residents to work with Lewisham Homes in shaping the services provided to the area and appraising needs, monitoring current services, suggesting local initiatives and emerging issues across the area. The Area Panel also prioritises small planned works schemes in the area. Area Panel meetings take place every other month in alternate months to Lewisham Homes Board. Details of the Area Panel constitution and code of conduct are available from the Community Involvement Team on 020 8314 9267, email getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk.

In addition to representatives from the TRAs the Area Panels also have representatives from Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) and the sheltered schemes in their area. Lewisham Homes Board members also attend these meetings to learn at first hand the concerns of residents.

Both Area Panels:

- Hold annual general meetings and have 5 other meetings per annum
- Elect a committee to run the panel.
- Have a constitution and a code of conduct
- Elect members to the Joint Partnership Board (details of election and eligibility criteria are set out in the constitution)
- Have an equalities and diversity policy that meets Lewisham Homes' standards.

Membership - elected representatives from the TRAs, representatives from TMOs and sheltered housing schemes in the area. Area Panels meet 6 times a year – so you would have to make that commitment – but remember to be on an Area Panel,

you have to belong to a TRA, TMO or Sheltered housing scheme, so you could be giving quite a bit of your time to this activity.

What is the Lewisham Homes Board?

Lewisham Homes residents can also become members of Lewisham Homes Board - the strategic decision making group for the organisation. Its members are registered as directors at Companies House.

Lewisham Homes Board has 15 members, they are

- 7 resident members (the resident membership is made up of 5 tenants and 2 leaseholders)
- 5 independent members and
- 3 councillors.

It is open for any secure tenant or leaseholder to stand for election to the board as vacancies occur. Training programmes developed to support the Charter will also contribute to succession planning for the board.

3.2 Dunlop Hayward's Resident Consultation Structure

- **Join (or start) a Tenant and Resident Association (TRA)**

Currently there are two Tenant and Resident Associations established in the Chrysalis area – Springfield Rise and SESTRA, which incorporates street properties along Sportsbank and Engleheart.

Dunlop Haywards would like to establish more TRAs in the area, and will be encouraging and supporting residents to do this. They would especially like to see more residents who live in street properties actively engaged.

If you are interested in establishing a Tenant and Resident Association and Dunlop Haywards is your management provider, please contact XXXX

- **Leaseholder Groups**

Dunlop Haywards will be looking to set up Leaseholder Groups to cover the Chrysalis area. If you are interested in getting this off the ground, please contact XXXX.

- **Join the Area Panel**

Dunlop Haywards is in the process of establishing its Area Panel for the Chrysalis area. The purpose of the Area Panel is to enable residents to influence and monitor the local housing service. The membership of the Area Panel will be drawn from the TRAs, Leaseholder Groups and general resident population to ensure that representation is as wide as possible.

- **Focus Groups**

Dunlop Haywards is planning to run a number of thematic focus groups over the course of the year, which look at specific issues relating to the housing service for example, issues such as neighbour nuisance, fly-tipping, or security.

If you are interested in participating in focus groups, please contact XXXX

3.3 Regenter B3's Resident Consultation Structure

- **Join (or start) a Tenant and Resident Association (TRA)**

Dunlop Haywards is planning to run a number of thematic focus groups over the course of the year, which look at specific issues relating to the housing service for example, issues such as neighbour nuisance, fly-tipping, or security.

If you are interested in participating in focus groups, please contact XXXX

Currently there are two Tenant and Resident Associations established in the Brockley PFI area – Clare Estate and Adelaide.

Regenter B3's will be providing the support to establish more TRAs in the area. The intention is to have an additional four TRAs set up by the end of 2008.

If you are interested in establishing a Tenant and Resident Association and Regenter B3 is your management provider, please contact Jim Duke on

- **Leaseholder Forum**

Regenter B3 manages over 500 leaseholders and they would like to establish a leaseholder forum to ensure the views and issues of their leaseholders are represented. If you are a leaseholder and managed by Regenter B3 and is interested in participating in the Leaseholder Forum, please contact Jim Duke on 020

- **Join the Residents' Panel**

Regenter B3 is in the process of establishing its Residents Panel for the Brockley PFI area. The purpose of the Residents' Panel is to enable residents to influence and monitor the local housing service. The membership of the Area Panel will be drawn from the TRAs, Leaseholder Groups and focus groups to ensure that representation is as wide as possible.

- **Focus Group/Seminars**

Regenter B3 is planning to run a series of focus groups and seminars over the course of the year, which look at specific housing issues.

If you have a suggestion for a focus group and/or you are interested in participating in one, please contact Jim Duke on XXXX.

- **Feedback on Major Works**

Regenter B3 will be undertaking comprehensive major works in the Brockley area. If refurbishment works are being undertaken in your home and you would like to give feedback and be involved in overseeing of the works, please contact Jim Duke on

3.4 Lewisham Council

Lewisham Council wants to ensure that all residents involved in their individual housing management providers consultation structures have the opportunity to come together to discuss performance and policy decisions on a strategic level as well as locally.

What is the Joint Partnership Board?

The Joint Partnership Board has evolved from the Tenants Strategy Group to bring together resident representatives from Lewisham Homes, Regenta B3, Dunlop Haywards and key councillors. Officers from the housing management providers and Lewisham Council will be in attendance to present reports and take back actions from the meetings.

The Joint Partnership Board will:

- Review the performance of Lewisham Homes, Regenta B3 and Dunlop Haywards
- Agree consultation processes for the Council's responsibilities e.g. rent setting, allocations and decant policies and the operation of Homesearch
- Influence the development of key strategies relating to housing
- Agree the performance information to be presented to the Area Panels
- Review the progress of Lewisham Homes, Regenta B3 and Dunlop Haywards against their Business Plans.
- Receive reports from groups i.e. Area Panels, Special Interest Groups, Focus Groups/Seminars run by housing management providers and makes recommendations arising from these.

For Lewisham Homes - resident membership is drawn from Area Panels and Special Interest Groups.

For Regenter B3 and Dunlop Haywards – resident membership will be drawn from their Area/Resident Panels and potentially other established groups to ensure representation.

4. STANDARDS

The Residents' Charter sets out core standards of consultation

4.1 Standard for Consultation

Lewisham Council as a minimum will expect its housing management providers to consult with residents:

- When services are reviewed
- Before entering into new contracts for works or services
- When introducing new services, changing or discontinuing existing services.
- When carrying out major works, external decorations and planned works on estates
- Where there are local issues of concern, e.g. an increase in anti-social behaviour, fly tipping

Lewisham Homes has set out how it will ensure consultation is meaningful for its residents and Lewisham Council recommends, where appropriate, that this is good practice for Dunlop Haywards & Regenter B3 to develop:

- Provide clear information on what is proposed, the cost implications, the options and the legal requirements that must be met.
- Include residents in assessing the impact of any changes on all sections of the community (Equalities Impact Assessment)
- Provide a forward plan of consultation and promote membership of the Resident Sounding Board, Special Interest Groups and local area and estate-based groups as a means of expressing views.
- Consult with local groups where the change affects a particular location or area.
- Consult with the Special Interest Groups on matters falling within their areas of interest
- Co-ordinate the responses from the consultation and provide feedback to residents to make sure that residents can see the effect they are having.

4.2 Standards for Consultation on Major Works

Each housing management provider is responsible for carrying out consultation on major works if residents in their area is affected by them. However, there will be differences in the approach of each housing management provider but Lewisham Council will ensure that good practice is shared and that providers tailor the consultation to the residents affected.

Overall, Lewisham Council has an expectation that all tenants and leaseholders will be consulted about planned schemes, capital schemes and initiatives that will affect their homes and the surrounding environment.

Lewisham Council will expect the following consultation from Lewisham Homes, Regenter B3 and Dunlop Haywards on major works as a minimum:-

- Liaise with TRAs about all proposed major works on their estates and blocks

APPENDIX 1

- Identify residents with special needs i.e. disability, language difficulties and make provision for them
- Information leaflet/letter sent to every household affected by the scheme providing full details of the works and contact details
- To ensure residents receive questionnaires or surveys, provide freepost envelopes and home visits to assist with completion
- Set up initial public meeting in a convenient venue and time for all residents to enable them to air concerns and views and to provide transport if required
- To set up steering or focus group if there isn't a TRA in place to work with provider about design and delivery of the scheme
- Training to be provided for residents if requested
- Regular updates provided for all residents on the progress of the major works
- Copies of specification and the terms of contract be made available to residents
- If interviews held for contractor, residents invited to send a representative on the panel
- Residents' representative be invited to attend site meetings
- Provide contact and emergency telephone numbers to residents
- At completion of the works, residents are invited to provide feedback on performance of the contractor and the housing management provider.

Strategically, Lewisham Council will ensure that tenants and leaseholders have an opportunity to give their views on the various major works programmes through the Joint Partnership Board.

Lewisham Homes have worked with their residents to update and develop the minimum consultation requirements for major works and these are outlined below:

Lewisham Homes residents will be involved in developing the major works investment programme, considering:

- Cost;
- Cost over the life of the component;
- Quality;
- Previous performance of the contractors; and
- Opportunities offered by partnership contracts, joint and consortium procurement

Strategically Lewisham Homes will:

- Consult residents on the investment strategy for example identify the priorities for spending
- Involve residents in the procurement process through the Repairs Forum – what are the best ways to buy things and from whom?

Locally Lewisham Homes will:

- Consult with residents about planned works and capital schemes that will affect their homes and the surrounding environment.
- Liaise with Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs) and provide support to set up a resident group for the duration of the works where no TRA exists

Lewisham Homes will give clear information on:

- Those works which are required to meet the decent homes standard
- Any additional funds available where residents can influence the works that are carried out.
- What tenants can expect while works are in progress, for example when fitting a new kitchen, bathroom or new wiring
- The choices available for new kitchens and bathrooms.
- The works to be carried out inside homes and in the communal areas
- The standard of work that residents can expect, including the contractors working hours and customer care that residents can expect.

Before the works begin Lewisham Homes will:-

- Identify residents with special needs such as those with disabilities or those requiring help with written or spoken English and make appropriate provision for them.
- Identify where there is a need to provide a respite centre
- Hold consultation and information meetings and provide newsletters on the works to be carried out
- Have specialist staff for leaseholders assigned to the scheme to deal with leaseholders enquiries in addition to carrying out the consultation required by law.
- Hold a meeting to introduce the contractor(s)
- Provide contact details of the resident liaison officer for the scheme and an out of hours emergency number.
- Liaise with the TRA or where one does not exist and provide support to establish a residents group for the duration of the works.

During the scheme Lewisham Homes will:

- Provide regular updates on progress through newsletters and meetings.
- Liaise with the TRA or resident group

When the works are completed Lewisham Homes will:

- Agree a snagging list with residents
- Carry out a resident satisfaction survey
- Contact any residents who were identified as having special needs at the commencement of the contract to ensure the works are completed to their satisfaction.
- Ensure all residents are familiar with new installations in their homes for example extractor fans and central heating boilers.

4.3 Standards for Services

Lewisham Council has in place service promises/guarantees when it was managing the housing service, for example, complaints and the repairs service. It is expected as a minimum that the housing management providers should adhere to relevant Council policies detailing service guarantees but that they are reviewed and monitored by their residents.

Lewisham Homes have been working with residents to develop their key service objectives and will:

- Publish service standards (that have been agreed with resident representatives and reviewed annually) for each service it provides to residents
- Have published standards of customer care that residents can expect when contacting Lewisham Homes by letter, e-mail and telephone, including setting out target response times
- Have published standards for reception offices setting out the information that will be provided, the target for waiting time, how the office meets the needs of residents with disabilities.
- Have a complaints procedure with clear standards focused on resolving the complaint and response times

4.4 Standards for Publications

All housing management providers will ensure:

- Publications are produced in plain English
- Summaries of key documents are available in the most common community languages, in audio and large print on request
- Documents and publications are easily accessible

Lewisham Homes residents:-

- Can access the Lewisham Homes website – www.lewishamhomes.org.uk to view key documents
- Will receive a quarterly news magazine - each issue will include a section on leasehold issues
- Involved in the Specialist Interest Group for communications will review publications regularly

Lewisham Council will work with Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3 to develop ways to ensure residents can access information and key documents about their services.

4.5 Standards for Meetings

The Charter sets out core standards about how meetings should be conducted to ensure effective participation and decision making.

As a minimum, Lewisham Council expects its housing management providers to:-

- Publicise meetings effectively with at least 10 days notice, or as consultation requires
- Hold meetings at agreed and flexible times in accessible places to maximise attendance
- Publicise meetings in a range of ways
- Have clear objectives and agendas for meetings
- Ensure meetings properly chaired and conducted in a fair and democratic way so that everyone gets a chance to have their say
- Produce a clear action plan to deal with matters arising

- Ensure there is a true and accurate record of decisions reached
- Have arrangements for reporting back the outcome, including feedback, to those who took part
- Address equality issues so that attendance is maximised
- Provide attendees with relevant information in plain language prior to the meeting
- Where appropriate, financial assistance will be provided to meet transport and carer costs for attendance at meetings

Meetings organised by Lewisham Homes

There is a Lewisham Homes code of conduct for meetings, further details are available from the Community Involvement Team on:-

Telephone: 020 8314 9267

Email: getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk.

In summary where Lewisham Homes organises the meeting :

- The agendas and requests for officer attendance will be agreed with the group's chair.
- A minimum of 5 working days notice of the meeting will be given
- The agenda, minutes from previous meetings and any reports being presented to the group will be sent with the notice of the meeting to all attendees of the previous meeting.
- Where groups meet at regular intervals or are required to hold a specified number of open meetings per year the dates for these will be set at the beginning of the cycle for the coming year.
- Agreed meeting dates will be displayed in the Area office on the website and available on request. Area Panel, Special Interest Group meetings, Joint Partnership Board and Lewisham Homes Board meeting dates will be published in the quarterly residents magazine.
- Where specific officers are asked to attend they will confirm their ability to attend, where they are unable to attend and offer a deputising officer this must be agreed with the chair.
- Notes of the meeting will be taken identifying action points and responsible officers. Feedback of action taken will be given at the subsequent meeting.
- The meeting will be conducted in line with the code of conduct. It is the chair's responsibility to enforce the code.
- At the close of the meeting a summary of the main points arising will be agreed.

4.6 Standards for Reporting Back to You

Lewisham Council and its housing management providers will provide regular updates and report back on actions to the Joint Partnership Board

Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3 will report back to its Area/Residents' Panel and local groups. Lewisham Homes will report to residents on the comments and views that are received through the local groups and the Resident Sounding Board.

The report back will have:

- A summary of the comments received
- What has been done to address the matters raised
- Any further action to be taken

Depending on the nature of the consultation the report back will be given to those taking part in the consultation or where the issue is of general concern through letters, newsletter or websites (if available).

The housing management providers should report back the results of any estate inspections undertaken to the Area Panels and to any local groups i.e. TRAs that represent the estate that was inspected and to any residents involved in the estate inspection. If housing management provider publish any newsletters that the results of the estate inspection be included. Lewisham Homes will ensure that the results are reported to the Lewisham Homes Board.

All the housing management providers will report back on the level and nature of the complaints, comments and compliments it receives and what it has done to address the causes of the complaints.

For Lewisham Homes, there will be a summary of the stage 3 complaints that are assessed by a panel consisting of a councillor, a resident and a Lewisham Homes board member. Lessons learnt from complaints, comments and compliments will be reported back in the quarterly residents magazine, 'Home'.

Where major works are being carried out responses to consultation will be included in the major works newsletter sent to all residents affected by the works.

5. MEASURING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE

Each housing management provider will give reports detailing specific performance data on local issues to the Area/Residents' Panels and this will be cascaded down to the TRAs. The Area/Residents' Panels will also inform the housing management provider what performance information they wish to receive.

Resident satisfaction surveys will be carried out annually to measure the overall satisfaction of residents with their housing management provider and the services they deliver.

5.1 Lewisham Council

The Joint Partnership Board will review the progress of Lewisham Homes, Dunlop Haywards and Regenta B3 against the targets in their Business Plans.

5.2 Charter Monitoring Group

The Charter Monitoring Group will assess the success of the Charter against a set of targets agreed annually.

5.3 Lewisham Homes – monitoring arrangements

5.3.1 The Special Interest Group on Performance will carry out telephone surveys, exit surveys and resident led inspections. Residents will be given the opportunity to train as resident inspectors. The results of the various inspections will be reported to Area Panels, local Tenant and Resident Associations where their area is inspected and published in the Residents magazine.

Lewisham Homes will publish an annual report on the performance of its services, and the influence that residents have had, this will be given to all residents.

Lewisham Homes Board receives regular performance reports against agreed targets.

5.3.2 Lewisham Homes performance measures

For its first year of operation the Lewisham Homes Compact group has agreed initial performance measures and targets, as shown in the table below. These will be developed further by the Charter Monitoring Group who will also assess the effectiveness of the Charter. This will include looking at whether the standards and targets included in the Charter have been met. The Group will set new targets for the following year. It will also consider the impact of resident involvement – that is, how it has led to improvements in the services to residents – and to what extent involvement has provided value for money.

The performance measures will be reported to Area Panels and the Joint Partnership Board on a quarterly basis, an example of what could be agreed is

set out below. Council would like to see Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3 work with its residents to develop something similar.

To be agreed (example targets for year 1)

MEASURE	TARGET	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS
INPUTS			
Increase in membership of the Resident Sounding Board	250	March 08	
To have North and South area panels established by		December 07	
To have Special Interest Groups established by		March 08	
Number of residents involved in estate inspections			
Number of residents involved in formal local groups			
Number of residents involved in other methods of engagement			
Proportion of involved residents who are from minority groups			
Proportion of involved residents who are aged 25 or under			
Proportion of involved residents who are women.			
Proportion of resident members of the Board, Customer and Area Panels who are from a minority group			
Proportion of resident members of the Board, Customer and Area Panels who are aged 25 or under			
Proportion of involved residents who are women.			
OUTPUTS			
Introduce resident involvement monitoring forms across all providers.		Date to be agreed with Lewisham Council.	
Performance reports developed and regularly reported to Area Panels, TRAs and Board		March 2008	
Identify the cost of involvement and compare to other ALMOs		March 2008	
OUTCOMES			
Percentage of officer reports to board that had the support of residents consulted on issue.	100%		
Satisfaction of tenants with the overall service provided. (Best Value Performance Indicator 74).	62%	July 08	
Satisfaction of tenants with the opportunity to participate in management and decision making (Best Value Performance Indicator	54%	July 08	

APPENDIX 1

75)			
Satisfaction with arrangements for involvement – proportion of involved residents			
Number or resident training sessions carried out			
Number of residents attending training courses			
Satisfaction with training courses			

6 RESOURCES - SUPPORTING THE CHARTER

We do not currently have a full understanding of the cost of supporting resident involvement across all of our services, however there is a target in our performance and monitoring plan to identify what we are spending on resident involvement and to compare this against others. Together with the introduction of an Resident Involvement Impact Monitoring Form, this will assist us to understand what value for money residents are getting from these activities.

Lewisham Homes has a Community Involvement and Diversity team supporting and promoting resident involvement. This includes a manager, two community development officers and three community involvement officers.

6.1 At a Local Level

Lewisham Homes has two dedicated Community Development Officers – one covering the North and one covering the South Area Offices. Their role is to

- Organise and service Area Panel meetings
- Assist developing Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs)
- Identify and promote funding streams for resident involvement
- Identify and support local initiatives that work towards sustainable communities.
- Develop and deliver a training programme to support resident involvement.

Area housing staff will attend all open meetings of each TRA to which they are invited and Community Development staff will attend all AGMs.

Lewisham Homes' Community Involvement and Diversity Manager with a team of officers will support the Resident Sounding Board and the Special Interest Groups. This team will lead the drive to involve all sections of the community, particularly those considered to be hard to reach groups.

The team will:

- Develop the role of the Resident Sounding Board
- Identify the need for information in other formats
- Produce and publish a forward plan for consulting with residents
- Continuously look for ways to improve consultation
- Collate comments and views from consultation carried out via the Resident Sounding Board and feed into relevant service teams
- Identify and find ways of involving hard to reach groups
- Organise an annual resident conference/event
- Provide information on and support residents interested in pursuing the Right to Manage.
- Identify and arrange resident training empowering residents, making them effective and able to influence the management of their homes.
- Identify training opportunities that will provide succession planning for the board.

- Link into external funding sources and provide support and guidance to groups to help access funding
- Provide information on external resident advisory services

Lewisham Homes will provide a training programme and direct residents to external training programmes to best meet the needs. If training spaces are available, Lewisham Homes will offer them to the residents of Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3.

Dunlop Haywards and Regenter B3 do not have dedicated Community/Resident Involvement officers. The Operations Manager at Dunlop Haywards has been supporting and servicing the Area Panels and housing officers supporting the established TRAs. Regenter B3 has a project manager for resident involvement and will be over the next year establishing more TRAs and strengthening the Residents' Panel.

6.2 Across Lewisham

All the housing management providers will organise their own resident's conference/event working with established resident involvement groups. Lewisham Council working with the Joint Partnership Board would like to ensure that there is an event which brings all the residents being managed by its housing management partners together to discuss borough-wide issues and concerns

All key staff will be made aware of the commitments made in the Charter and the contribution they have to make to ensure that excellent services are delivered and satisfaction increased of its residents.

6.3 Lewisham Tenant Fund (LTF)

Lewisham Council tenants pay a weekly levy in their rent to support resident involvement for council tenants. The Council pays the tenant levy to Lewisham Tenants' Fund. This is an independent company, the directors of which are tenants from within the borough of Lewisham.

LTF makes grants to support resident involvement. The grant allocation policy is currently under review.

For further information on LTF funding, contact the Community Involvement Team on 020 8314 9267 or alternatively your housing officer.

LTF can be reached at:

Capital House, Rushey Green, London SE6 4AS
Tel: 020 8698 4727
E-mail: l-t-f@btconnect.com

7 STANDARD FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Although the parties to this Agreement will seek to deal with any potential disputes informally through discussion it is recognised that having an agreed procedure for dealing with disputes before they arise will ensure that any discord or dispute arising will be dealt with swiftly.

1. Should a dispute between residents and service providers arise out of the operation of this Charter, any of the parties may serve a Notice of Dispute. The notice will state the nature of the dispute and the action the aggrieved party wishes the other party to take in order to resolve it.
2. Notices of Dispute must be responded to within 28 days of receipt giving clear answers to the points made in the Notice.
3. If the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the response, they must give reasoned consideration as to whether the dispute could be settled by mediation or some other form of alternative dispute resolution and to respond in writing within seven days of the request; or
Convene a Special Meeting to consider the dispute, to be held within 14 days of receiving the response
4. If after the above disputes procedure has been followed the dispute remains unresolved or one party does not follow the dispute process, the Council, provider or resident may refer the dispute to arbitration using the services of an arbitrator as agreed.