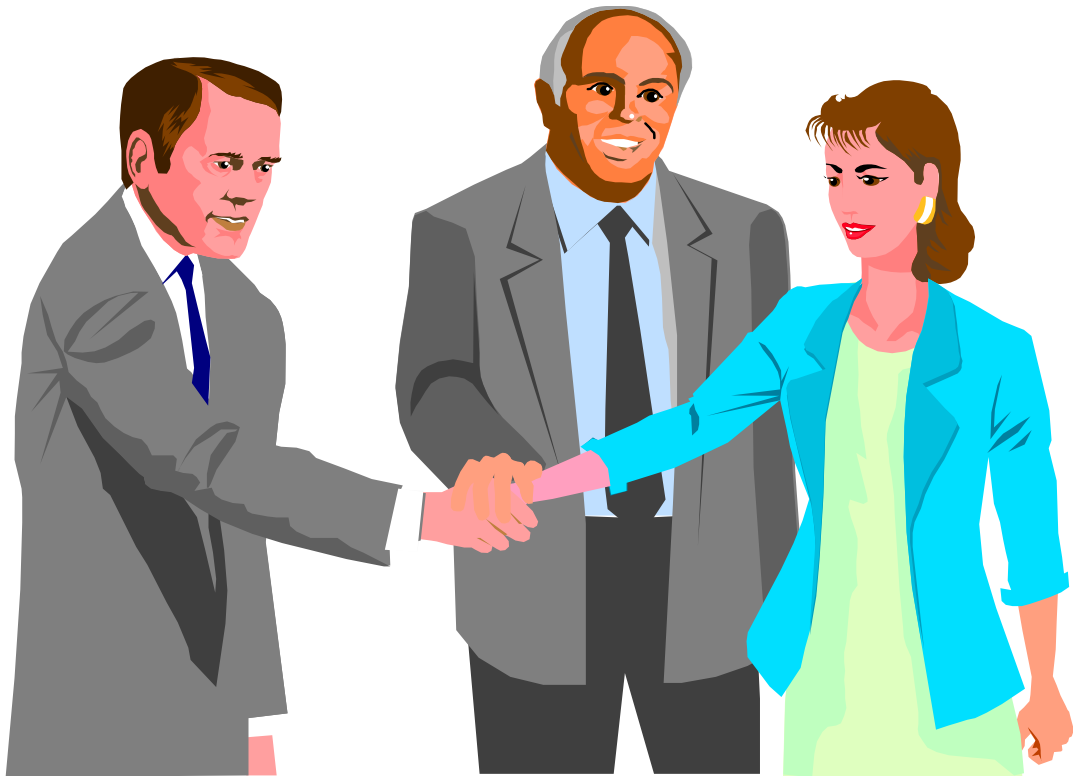


Working Together



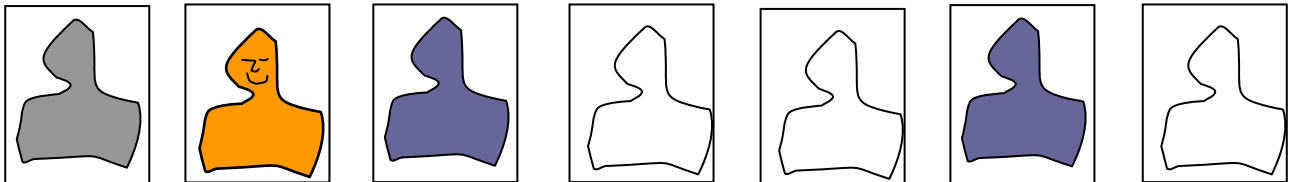
[We plan to insert a photo of lots of people involved now instead of this one]

**A partnership agreement between
Tenants, Leaseholders and the Council
in the London Borough of Southwark**

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 1. A fresh beginning**
- 2. How we developed this agreement**
- 3. How tenants and Leaseholders are involved now**
- 4. Making it better – priorities for improvement**
- 5. Making it work – Year 1 Compact Action Plan**

1 A FRESH BEGINNING



We, the **tenants, leaseholders, council officers** and **Councillors** of Southwark have drawn up this agreement to set out **how we will work together from now on.**

We believe that

- **Every tenant and leaseholder in Southwark deserves to live in the best possible home and environment.**
- **The best guarantee of a high quality housing service is through tenants, leaseholders, Councillors and officers working together in partnership.**
- **Tenants and leaseholders in Southwark should be involved at the level they want and have a real influence over their housing services and the management of their local areas.**
- **Each person involved in this partnership working – whether they are a tenant, leaseholder, Councillor or Council officer – must display the highest standards of courtesy, professionalism and respect while doing so.**

The aims of this Compact are

- **To renew our joint commitment to participation.**
- **To review the existing participation framework.**

Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

- To make sure tenants and leaseholders in Southwark can be involved at the level they want and that their involvement makes a real difference.
- To promote wider, more representative participation in the borough.

We will do this by:

1. Seeking to improve the relationship between council officers, tenants and leaseholders at all times.
2. Providing information to tenants and leaseholders on how they can be involved. The Tenant Participation Compact for example is designed so that people can use it to find information on Housing Involvement in their neighbourhood and getting their voice heard in the borough.
3. Working to enable existing groups to be more representative of and accountable to the community they serve.
4. Increasing the number of tenants and leaseholders currently involved – both through existing structures and new methods of involvement.
5. Jointly planning how resources allocated to Tenant and Leaseholder involvement are employed to make sure they are used effectively .
6. Providing information to tenants and leaseholders on the work of the Council, Southwark Housing and Tenant & Leaseholder Groups - including performance information to facilitate involvement.
7. Developing the partnership between Councillors, council officers, tenants and leaseholders in planning and improving the housing service - including how local issues of crime and housing repairs are addressed.
8. Jointly monitoring this agreement and progress against the Compact Action Plan.
9. Supporting the development and sustainability of Tenant Managed Organisations (TMOs).

Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

Signed by

- **Borough-wide Tenant and Leaseholder representatives**
 - Chair of Tenant Council **Name xxxxxx**
 - Chair of Leaseholder Council **Name xxxxxx**
 - Chair of Southwark Group of Tenant Organisations (SGTO) **Name xxxxxx**
 - Chair of Southwark Black and Minority Ethnic Tenants and Residents Associations (SBMETRO) **Name xxxxxx**
- **Council**
 - Leader of the Council, **Name xxxxxx**
 - Cabinet Member for Housing **Name xxxxxx**
 - Leader of the Opposition **Name xxxxxx**
 - Leader of the Minority Opposition **Name xxxxxx**
 - Director of Housing, **Name xxxxxx**
- **Date:**

Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

2 HOW WE DEVELOPED THE AGREEMENT

Tenant Participation Compacts have been introduced by the Government following consultation with national tenants' organisations like TAROE (Tenants and Residents Organisations of England) and TPAS (the Tenant Participation Advisory Service). In most places tenants and residents rather than the Council have led on their development.

There are two types of Compact:

The first is the Boroughwide Compact. This is a signed agreement covering how tenants and leaseholders can be involved in making the bigger decisions about planning housing services across the borough.

The other type is the Local Compact. These are similar agreements that cover housing services in a particular neighbourhood, area or around a certain issue or group of people.

Here in Southwark, a group of tenants, leaseholders, Councillors and officers began meeting in 1999 to develop the Compact. This is the TPC Project Board. The Board decided to produce the borough-wide Compact first. It agreed a high quality Compact was important so it started off by looking at tenant participation in Southwark and elsewhere. Experts independent of the council were asked to consult tenants and leaseholders on what they thought of the existing arrangements. The Project Board agreed it wanted to build on what was good, look for new, imaginative ways to involve more tenants and leaseholders and increase their influence on decision-making.

2.1 The Review

The Project Board reviewed tenant and leaseholder participation in four ways:

- **Where we are now** – The Board looked at how tenants and leaseholders can currently participate in the housing service.
- **Consultation** – Independent experts reviewed our consultation procedures using tenant workshops, surveys and telephone interviews.
- **Best Practice** – The Board compared Southwark with top performing councils in the country and the latest guidelines on what's best from national housing organisations.
- **Joining things up** – The Board also examined how the Council was changing the way it took decisions. Introducing Area Forums and replacing Committees by a Cabinet of Councillors affects tenant and leaseholder involvement.

2.2 The Compact

From this work the Project Board agreed the borough-wide Tenant Participation Compact for Southwark.

The Compact will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect what is happening in the borough and the progress of the new partnership.

Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

T+RAs and other housing organisations will receive two additional leaflets containing further detail on involvement in Southwark and the work we've done. These Leaflets are working documents that were used to develop the Compact and will form a starting point for how it will be developed in the future.



The Tenant Participation Compact

This contains the signed Agreement, shows how and why the Compact was developed, and includes an Action Plan showing the improvements we will be making this year.

Leaflet 1 – Involvement in Housing Services, looks at tenant and leaseholder involvement in the Housing Service as a whole by explaining what happens now and suggesting improvements.

Leaflet 2 - Standards for tenant and leaseholder involvement, looks at standards for Information, Meetings, Conduct, T&RAs, Support and Equal Opportunities in Southwark's present housing involvement structures. It also includes suggestions for how the standards could be improved.

Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

3 HOW TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS ARE INVOLVED NOW

Southwark's history of tenant and leaseholder involvement goes back to the early 1950s. The current involvement structures, resources and support were first jointly agreed in 1991 and have developed continuously since.

Our current arrangements are mainly covered by the Southwark Housing's:

- **Tenant Participation Policy**
- **Residents Involvement Charter**
- **Housing Management Standards**
- **Taking Part and being Involved** - part of the Tenants Handbook

The Housing Community Development section can tell you more about these. See *[contact details on Front Cover]*

3.1 The current set-up

The structures and representative bodies in housing currently include:

- Over 150 local **Tenant and Resident Associations** (T & RAs)
- 2 **Leaseholder organisations** (Dulwich RTB/ Leaseholder Association of Southwark 2000)
- 1 **Freeholder Association**
- 14 **Tenant Management Organisations** (TMOs)
- **TMO Liaison Committee**
- 17 **Housing Neighbourhood Forums**
- **Southwark Tenant Council**
- **Southwark Leaseholder Council**
- **SGTO** (Southwark Group of Tenant & Resident Organisations)
- **SBMETRO** (Southwark Black and Minority Ethnic Tenants' and Residents' Organisations)
- **SDA** (Southwark Disablement Association)
- **Southwark Pensioners' Forum**
- **Southwark Housing Conference, Southwark Housing Forums & Southwark Tenants' Conference** - which develop housing strategy and our plans for the future.
- **Area Forums** - a new type of discussion forum being tried out this year in six areas of the borough this year. These aim to increase community involvement and dialogue between the council, residents and others with an interest.
- Involvement in Regeneration projects - such as in Southwark Estates Initiative (SEI); Aylesbury NDC (New Deal for Communities) – through the **Aylesbury Plus Community Forum** and the **Aylesbury Plus Partnership Board**; the **Peckham Partnership**; and at Elephant and Castle.
- **CHAP** (the Cabinet Housing Advisory Panel), a joint group of tenants, leaseholders and other representatives which advises the Cabinet member for Housing.

3.2 Residents' Involvement Charter

The Tenant Participation Compact builds on the aims and commitments of the **Residents' Involvement Charter** agreed in 1998. This Charter commits Southwark Housing to:

- Delivering a top quality housing service.

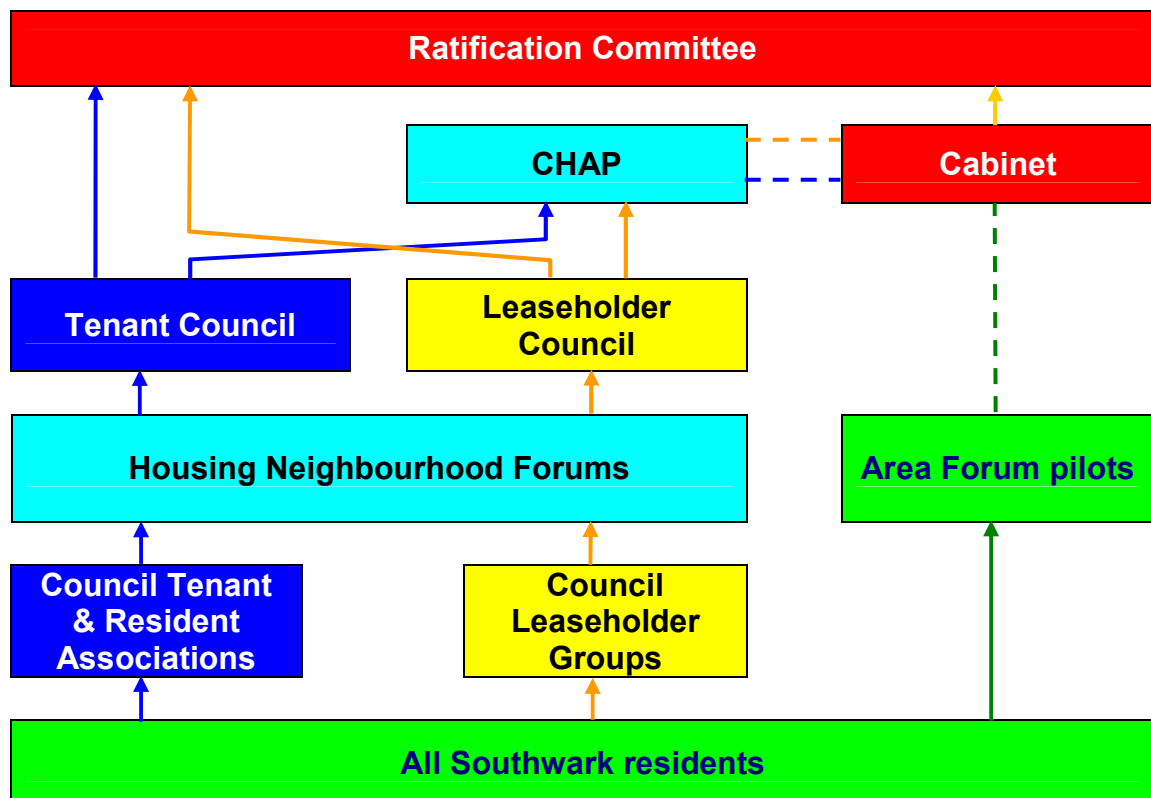
Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

- Understanding and meeting the housing needs and wishes of all Southwark residents.
- Helping all Southwark residents to be involved in decisions which affect their homes.
- Ensuring that everyone is involved.

The Charter also commits Southwark Housing to:

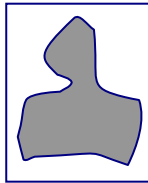
- Providing information in ways which everyone can understand and use.
- Continually improving the ways we consult residents about housing matters.
- Helping residents to participate in identifying and finding solutions to problems with the housing service.
- Giving residents the power to influence housing policy and strategy.
- Making every effort to ensure no resident is excluded from involvement because of discrimination, disability, language, carer's responsibilities or work commitments.

3.3 How Resident Involvement works now

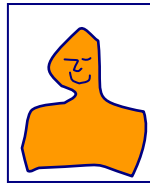


3.4 Roles and Responsibilities

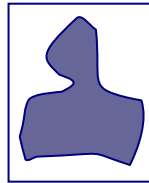
[Insert pictures of Senior Housing Managers listing the responsibilities of each member. List the responsibilities of tenant and leaseholder representatives too]



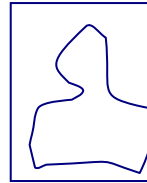
Director
of
Housing



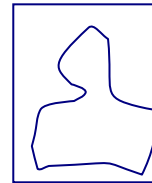
Head of
Community
Housing
Services



Head of
Housing
Management



Head of
Performance
and Quality



Head of
Strategy and
Regeneration

3.5 Summary of current Resources

Some of the ways the council currently supports tenants' and leaseholders' involvement are listed below.

- Housing Community Development spends around £400,000 per year on tenant involvement including around 16 central and neighbourhood-based staff

111 T&RAs manage their own Tenant Halls. All NHO Tenant Rooms provide office facilities and crèche packs for T&RA use.

- The Tenants Fund is a budget set aside to promote tenant participation equivalent to 14p per week from every tenant's rent. The Tenants Fund is managed by a committee of tenants and had a total budget in 2000/ 2001 of £494,615 including the following:

Staff

Tenant Funding Monitoring Officer	£21,285
Training Officer	£14,066
Training Provision	£5,000

Grants

SGTO Funding	£171,700
Funding T&RAs @ £3.25per tenancy	£171,379
Equal Opportunities Fund	£2,000
Youth/ Young People's Development Fund	£10,000
SBMETRO	£25,000

Other Activities

Expenses for T&RA representatives	£2,000
NHO Tenant Rooms	£5,000
Tenants Conference	£10,000

Southwark Tenant Participation Compact

- The DETR has provided the Council with £134,209 to develop this Compact over 2000/2001 and 2001/2002.

4 **MAKING IT BETTER – Priorities For Improvement**

We want to build a new spirit of partnership and be accountable to each other, sharing rights and responsibilities. We also want to develop new ways of jointly monitoring our performance and how this Compact is working. The work done by the Project Board, particularly the Consultation, showed the following ideas are important:

Tenant Participation Compacts

Tenants and leaseholders want compacts to:

- Improve how housing staff, tenants and leaseholders relate to each other
- Establish high standards for all meetings
- Address local issues of crime and housing repairs
- Improve the way we currently organise consultation, such as T&RAs, Neighbourhood Forums, Tenant Council and Leaseholder Council so they're practical, direct and easy to understand.

Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement

Though they support most of the current consultation arrangements, tenants and leaseholders want:

- More joint decision-making and involvement at earlier stages, especially when developing policy and strategy that affects their homes or neighbourhoods.
- Greater influence and control at the neighbourhood level and greater consistency in Neighbourhood Forum quality across the borough.

Resources

- The money currently spent on involvement could be used more effectively.

Information

- Tenants and leaseholders would like better, more regular feedback of information from the council.
- Most people prefer receiving information through newsletters and would like these to be improved.

Talking to each other

More people could be involved and better dialogue between the council, tenants and leaseholders obtained if improvements were made to the:

- Training of Councillors, council officers, tenant and leaseholder representatives
- Methods used for recruiting tenant and leaseholder representatives
- The quality of events
- Standards for support and resources
- Use of computers and Information Technology (IT) in housing involvement

Complaints

- The Housing Complaints and dispute settlement procedures could be developed to cover tenant involvement complaints as well.

Including Everyone

- The involvement of under-represented groups needs to be improved.

Local Compacts

Local Compacts are locally-developed agreements that outline the responsibilities and standards each partner agrees to uphold. They could be either area-based or issue-based. For example in:

- Housing Neighbourhoods
- Tenant Management Organisations
- Individual Estates
- Sheltered Housing

and for:

- Young People
- Tenants and residents with disabilities
- Black and Minority Ethnic tenants and leaseholders
- Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Voluntary organisations
- Other groups who request them

Regeneration

- Regeneration partnerships seem one of the best ways of improving involvement. However, tenants and leaseholders want to be involved earlier, continuously and get more feedback. They want to drive the renewal of their own communities.
- Links between regeneration projects and participation structures could be improved.

Change of Landlord

- Should the landlord of their property change, tenants and leaseholders want:
 1. Their current involvement rights to stay the same
 2. The Compact Action Plan to be kept.

5 **MAKING IT WORK – Year 1 Action Plan and Monitoring**

Using the results of the consultation and research we have agreed an eight-point Action Plan with clear targets for taking the Compact forward this year. During the year progress on these improvements will be checked regularly and the information fed back to partnership members.

EIGHT-POINT COMPACT ACTION PLAN

Point 1 Increasing tenant and leaseholder involvement in running the housing service.

- 1A Extending tenant and leaseholder involvement in housing strategy, policy and finance by setting up a new joint Partnership Board.
- **1st meeting by January 2002.**
- 1B Holding annual neighbourhood workshops for tenants and leaseholders - including special meetings for young people and other under-represented groups - before the annual Southwark Housing Conference and drafting of the Housing Strategy.
- **By March 2002.**
- 1C Including tenant and leaseholder representatives from the outset on the Project Boards for the Best Value Reviews of the Housing Management and Community Services divisions.
- **Ongoing - Partnership Board to monitor**
- 1D Monitoring the number of decisions made jointly
- **Partnership Board to develop an effective method of checking this during the first year.**

Point 2 Addressing issues of local concern.

2A Increasing tenants and leaseholders involvement in neighbourhood housing management:

- (i) Raising the standards and increasing the representativeness of all Neighbourhood Forums
- **By using the suggestions identified during the Consultation and Review to jointly produce a new Guide to Involvement Standards for officers, tenants, leaseholders and Councillors by April 2002.**
 - **Through developing a new joint Training Programme (see Point 4 below).**

- (ii) Giving tenants and leaseholders greater involvement in neighbourhood housing management performance.
- **By a quarterly report containing agreed key Southwark Housing Performance Indicators to each T&RA and Neighbourhood Forum by January 2002.**
 - **By developing the Tenants Satisfaction Survey to establish 10 borough-wide Performance Indicators for all Neighbourhoods.**
- 2B Giving Neighbourhood Forums greater control of contract and budget-monitoring including regular reports from internal and external contractors.
- **Local Compacts will be promoted, developed and agreed in housing Neighbourhoods that want them. The agreements will be developed locally and will outline the local responsibilities and standards that each partner agrees to uphold. (See also Point 2C below)**
 - **The Partnership Board will monitor who has been consulted and involved in Local Compact development, as well as their quality and how effectively they represent local people's views.**
- 2C Increasing the number of budgets over which individual Neighbourhood Forums and T&RAs have a real influence.
- **Through Local Compacts in Neighbourhood and Estates. (See also Point 2B above)**
 - **Through supporting the development and operation of Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs)**

Point 3 Building stable communities by increasing tenants and leaseholders role in neighbourhood renewal and in developing communities.

- 3A Making sure our procedures for agreeing major schemes and contracts involve people early, continuously and provide more feedback from regeneration partnerships.
- **By involving tenants and leaseholders on all options, possibilities and proposals for new projects from their outset.**
 - **By improving our current procedures and through reviewing Southwark Housing's handbook on repair and improvement works consultation by October 2002.**
- 3B Monitoring both the numbers of tenants and leaseholders attending and represented at Area Forums. Monitoring what issues are discussed at Area Forums.
- **By developing standard attendance sheets and monitoring forms to return to Southwark Housing.**
 - **By continuing to develop the relationship between Housing Neighbourhood Forums and the Area Forums.**

Point 4 Continuously improving our partnership working.

Setting the highest standards of courtesy and professionalism on all sides and at every level of our housing involvement arrangements to increase mutual respect and trust e.g. in meetings, in all personal and written contacts.

- **By production of the new Guide to Standards for Housing Involvement mentioned in Point 2A(i) above.**
- **Through developing by January 2002 a new joint Training Programme in tenant involvement for tenants and leaseholders, council officers and Councillors to attend together during the first year of the Compact. This initial training programme will be completed by September 2002 and further developed after reviewing its success.**
- **By regularly monitoring the number of staff, residents and Councillors being trained together.**
- **Through new neighbourhood and some other housing staff spending time on an estate with a local tenant or leaseholder representative, getting to know their local area and the concerns of residents. Schedules of these staff will be agreed with Neighbourhood Forums, from January 2002.**
- **Likewise, as part of the training of all new Tenants' and Residents' Association committee members from January 2002 – all new members will in future spend some time in a local housing office getting to know housing staff and their work.**

Point 5 Helping tenants to play a more informed role in Southwark Housing's decision-making through easy access to information.

5A Through developing, agreeing and publicising Rights to Housing Information for tenants and leaseholders.

- **Develop and agree during the first year**

5B Improving feedback to tenants of the results of borough-wide and local research on tenant satisfaction, repairs, benefits, Best Value,

- **Through the Annual Report to Tenants; in 2 copies per year of Southwark Housing News; in 2 copies per year of each Neighbourhood Newsletter.**

5C Improving tenant access to information by ensuring the production of the Neighbourhood newsletters, Southwark Housing News and the Annual Report to Tenants and that their contents and style are in future developed by joint editorial teams.

- **Establish joint editorial team pilots for newsletters in 4 Neighbourhoods and for Southwark Housing News by January 2002. Joint editorial team for all Neighbourhood newsletters to be in place by October 2002.**

- **Include a Tenant Participation news and information section in every Neighbourhood newsletter and in Southwark Housing News.**

5D Providing information in a variety of formats.

- **Review the accessibility and distribution of information together with the number of tenants and residents requiring special formats in each neighbourhood by July 2002. Develop a system for continuously reviewing afterwards so the numbers are always up-to-date.**
- **Produce large print copies of all main housing publications. Produce more information in formats such as on floppy disc or CD ROM and more audio versions. Investigate demand for Braille copies. Review the translations required in local neighbourhoods and estates against the core list of languages in Southwark. Investigate how to improve the inclusion of the deaf and hard-of-hearing in housing involvement.**
- **Introduce a library of all main housing publications in special formats at each Neighbourhood Housing Office for public access by October 2002.**

5E Providing on-line housing information and communications for tenants and leaseholders.

- **Commission research into options by April 2002. Evaluate results and draw up action plan by October 2002.**

5F Ensuring the decisions of tenant and leaseholder bodies are fully representative and inform the decision-making of Southwark Council.

- **By means of a wider review into Tenant and Leaseholder Participation structures and their support in Southwark by October 2002 (see 6A below).**

5G Helping improve the communications between Neighbourhood Forums, Tenant and Leaseholder Councils. Improving feedback at all levels of the current system.

- **As further parts of the same review into Tenant and Leaseholder Participation mentioned above (point 5E).**

Point 6 Improving the effectiveness of tenant participation in the borough.

6A Making the most effective use of resources for tenant and leaseholder self-representation by reviewing existing funding and support arrangements for tenant and leaseholder involvement in Southwark.

- **Recommendations of funding review ready by January 2002.**
- **Review support as part of Best Value review of Housing Management by October 2002.**

- 6B Reviewing Southwark Housing's Tenant Participation Policy to reflect the aims of the Tenant Participation Compact.
- **Agree new draft by April 2002.**
- 6C Increasing how representative the existing consultation mechanisms are, by encouraging the involvement of more young people and members of under-represented groups.
- **Help tenants and leaseholders develop stronger links with their local schools to encourage current schoolchildren to become members of the tenants movement in the future. Encourage more T&RAs to develop special subgroups for young people and other groups in their community.**
 - **Hold planning day with members of under-represented groups - including members of Southwark Disablement Association (SDA) and Southwark Black and Minority Ethnic Tenants and Residents Organisations (SBMETRO) - to agree a new involvement framework by April 2002.**

Point 7 Promoting and developing the Tenant Participation Compact

- 7A Distributing the Compact to all tenant and leaseholder households, Southwark Housing staff, other Council staff and Councillors. Printing extra copies to promote the Compact and for others to distribute and retain.
- **Compact launch March 2002**
- 7B Distributing the leaflets on Involvement in Housing Services and Involvement Standards widely - to T&RAs, NHOs, borough-wide tenant bodies, One Stop Shop, Advice Centres, Libraries, Schools, Housing Business Units and Voluntary Organisations.
- **By March 2002**
- 7C Working with local RSLs to developing their own Compacts.
- **Hold briefing meeting with Southwark Housing Associations Group (SOUHAG) to develop further by March 2002.**
 - **Investigate setting up joint T&RAs with both RSL and Southwark Housing tenant and leaseholder membership.**

Point 8 Jointly managing and monitoring the effectiveness of the Compact.

- 8A Using the new joint Partnership Board to monitor progress against this Action Plan and develop the Compact further.
- **Partnership Board to begin meeting by January 2002.**

- 8B Exploring how the housing Complaints and dispute settlement procedures (including arbitration and mediation) could be extended to cover tenant involvement complaints too.
- **Agree new procedure by July 2002.**
 - **Improve promotion of Complaints process so more tenants and leaseholders are aware of it.**
- 8C Strengthening the borough-wide Compact through encouraging tenants and leaseholders to negotiate and develop further local and specialist Compacts. E.g. in Neighbourhoods, individual estates, with young people, with black and minority ethnic tenants.
- **Begin developing immediately.**
 - **Jointly develop local training on Compacts and developing local action plans.**

Checking progress

Until now tenants and leaseholders have rarely been able to check the effect their involvement has had on their housing services. We have agreed to change this.

A new Performance Monitoring Framework for Southwark Housing

It is proposed that:

- A new Partnership Board of tenants, leaseholders, Councillors and senior housing managers meet quarterly to discuss Strategy, Policy and Finance. The performance of the Housing Service, our progress developing the Compact and against the Compact Action Plan will also be part of it's terms of reference. These terms of reference will be developed over the board's initial meetings.
- New Working Groups similar to the TPC Project Board will meet regularly to carry out the work detailed in the Compact, reporting their progress to the new Partnership Board.
- Each Neighbourhood Forum will have more opportunity to monitor housing service performance.
- T&RAs will have; regular performance information concerning their estate linked to the monthly estate walkabout; neighbourhood performance information; and will be encouraged to develop local Compacts where they want them.