

Minutes



Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group Meeting

18th November 2025

11am-1pm

HMS Brave, DDC

Members

Neil Drakley (Chair - Tenant)

Tricia Hayward (Vice Chair - Tenant)

C■■■ T■■■ (Leaseholder)

K■■■ S■■■ (Tenant)

Ca■■ H■■ (Tenant)

Mr and Mrs C■■■■■ (Leaseholder)

Dover District Council

Councillor Pamela Brivio, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Education and Skills

Perry DeSouza, Strategic Housing Manager

Jodi Blizard, Housing Policy Officer

Liana Gale, Assistant Strategic Housing Officer

Yvonne Adewumi, Housing Manager - Operations

Elly Toye, Housing Options Manager

Sheila Welsh, Senior Temporary Accommodation Officer

DDC Contractor

Karen Jewell, Mears

Apologies

Beth Becks, Principal Tenant Engagement and Monitoring Officer

C■■■ H■■■■■, Tenant

	Minutes	Actions
1	<u>Welcome, Instructions and Apologies 11am</u> Apologies, Beth Becks and C■■■ H■■■■■	
2	<u>Minutes and Actions 11.05am</u> Approved of last minutes Neil updated on Mears meeting: held at their Offices, all satisfactory and seems to be going well. K■■■ S attending next meeting with Neil.	

	<p>Tricia raised issue regarding mobility scooters because of uneven tarmac Action: Neil will raise this at next meeting with Mears</p> <p>Karen Jewell will return to Tricia regarding this issue – looked into this during the meeting and started to provide an update.</p>	Neil Drakley
3	<p><u>Tenancy Review: Tenant Update and Feedback (update from Yvonne) 11.10</u></p> <p>Complaints regarding knowing housing officer and needing more support. As a result of this, tenancy review of all properties to ensure the properties are safe and well managed. Make sure they have support which they need including referrals, rent arrears, signpost for housing benefits, health and safety checks e.g. damp and mould or repairs; this would be sent to repairs teams. Regarding health and safety, this is to check any outstanding issues which might not have been picked up from property checks.</p> <p>K■■■■ S raised issue about pushchairs and obstructions in communal areas causing a fire risk.</p> <p>C■■■■ T raised issue that once these are fixed they then return.</p> <p>Yvonne explained that if storage is an issue, can look to help with this however would lead to enforcement action if the tenant could not resolve this as would be a breach of tenancy.</p> <p>Discussed issue of persistent tenancy breaches. C■■■■ T highlighted that the Council should take more action to prevent drug taking and issues with communal areas whilst waiting for court date.</p> <p>Yvonne updated 3 possession orders last month and this will filter down and prevent tenancy breaches, will be in newsletter to raise awareness. Housing Officers will attend properties to gather evidence and offer support or referrals to access support. Often need police reporting too where there is criminal activity.</p> <p>Yvonne would like list of addresses and the issues which are present there.</p> <p>Yvonne has said she is happy for DDTCG to email list of addresses where there are tenancy breaches such as subletting and/or criminal activity:</p> <p>Email: housing@dover.gov.uk</p> <p>Subject line: FAO Yvonne Adewumi</p> <p>Yvonne confirmed Police do not necessarily share information with Housing due to GDPR.</p>	

	<p>Time span to complete tenancy review: 2 years considering around 4500 properties.</p> <p>Tenancy reviews will not be completed on leasehold properties. Subletting of leasehold should be reported to the HomeOwnership team – homeownership@dover.gov.uk / 01304 872247</p> <p>Leasehold meeting is happening separately; C T will bring up specific issues here.</p> <p>Would it be useful if we had successful enforcement action? DDTCG has confirmed yes, perhaps on 'Keep Me Posted'.</p>	
4	<p><u>Mears: Update from Karen Jewell 11.30am</u></p> <p>Customer Satisfaction and Social Value</p> <p>'Voice of the Customer' enables residents to provide feedback, survey link texted to the resident (10 questions based on Regulator), need up to date telephone number to do this.</p> <p>DDTCG provided feedback that text not received – Karen J following up on this.</p> <p>Issue that text does not say Mears, however Karen confirmed that survey response rate is still high.</p> <p>If survey score is below a certain number, this is immediately passed on to Mears and contact made. The survey data is collected by 'SMOKE'.</p> <p><u>Survey questions</u></p> <p>'First time' question could be misleading to customer; emergency repair may be made safe then require follow up.</p> <p>DDTCG feedback: why so many questions? Could put people off completing. Karen J informed most important questions asked first in case respondents do not complete. Folkestone have less questions and twice as many responses. However more Dover responses than Thanet, Mears has observed that Dover tend to be quite responsive to surveys.</p> <p><u>Call handling</u></p> <p>Phone calls do not inform where you are in the queue, Mears are looking into this however it is a small call centre.</p> <p>Sometimes feedback can be more relevant to individual needs and staff's ability to act in accordance with these rather than the repairs directly. Mears has seen an increase of individual needs, yet feedback is still relatively positive.</p>	

	<p><u>Social value</u></p> <p>Tenant training highlighted to DDTCG.</p> <p>Different examples discussed such as apprenticeships.</p> <p>Criteria is that it must benefit the community; this can be either just Council tenants or whole community, Dover is seeming to opt for whole community. Karen J suggested that the community get together and nominate someone. Would need strict criteria based on what Mears are able to do.</p> <p>Mears will be litter picking in local areas soon – Housing Services have been asked and have nominated best areas to do this.</p> <p>C■■■ T raised about deaf and blind residents, Karen J informed that if Mears are made aware, this will be added to their system, and any reasonable adjustments will be applied. Will only have this personal information if relevant.</p>	
5	<p><u>TA Interim/Accommodation Update 12.25</u></p> <p>Dedicated TA team has been in place for last 12 months. Responsible for sign up right to allocation.</p> <p>Harold street – 4 TA units – K■■■ raised issues arising from a TA address – Elly to take this back to the tenants.</p> <p>Regarding any future concerns about TA neighbours:</p> <p>Email: housingoptions@dover.gov.uk</p> <p>FAO: Elly Toye & Sheila Welsh</p> <p>Discussed issue of not disposing of waste properly and maybe DDC could promote what to recycle etc., however DDTCG suggested this may not make much of a difference.</p> <p>Elly explains DDC's utilisation of space, due to limited housing stock, which is why we occasionally overcrowd temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Sheila explains the frequency of visits to TA tenants by TA team, with more frequent visits made to vulnerable/ASB TA tenants that they are aware of.</p> <p>C■■■ T raised possible concern around councils' duty of care to existing tenants. Sheila explains TA mirrors general needs, main difference is no secure tenancy. Sign up information provided at beginning, and this is all the same. Verification check process in place regarding those with previous arrears/ASB etc, it is</p>	

	<p>dependent on vulnerabilities and individual cases when allocating those to TA.</p> <p>The TA team also work with local landlords and private accommodation to rehome. TA team expanded due to patch size, management of TA as a whole and increasing housing list. Increase in TA team allows DDC to revisit processes.</p> <p>Pam expressed perspective that increased TA stock can decrease dependability and expenses on private TA use.</p> <p>Waste clearance is recharged to previous tenant.</p> <p>ASB of TA easier to deal with than secure tenants if want to evict. Although threshold still high, need as much evidence as possible. Half of TA team manage council-owned properties and other half manage which Council do not own. There is an extensive process regarding background checks. However, some will not show signs until moved in. Any activity TA team are made aware of is passed onto/addressed by relevant team.</p> <p>DDTCG expressed appreciation for insight and information from Elly and Sheila attending.</p>	
6	<p><u>Tenant Engagement Update 12.55</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Survey 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 649 Surveys Tenant Surveys completed to date. We are aiming for 700 before 24th December. We're very close to our total now! ○ On 30th October, we sent a targeted text message to people from groups we hadn't heard enough from. We received 89 responses from these and it helped balance our sample which is now representative. • Keep me posted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have sent an email to all residents that have completed the survey and provided their email address. The email informed them about 'Keep Me posted', this led to 22 new subscribers. • Awaab's Law – Damp and Mould update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Damp and Mould Policy was approved in December 2023 and is now being reviewed. ○ The Policy is due for review and there has been new relevant legislation; the Hazards in Social Housing Regulations 2025 (also known as Awaab's Law) came into force on the 27th November and applies to all social housing landlords, it sets out the time frames which 	

	<p>emergency hazards and damp and mould cases must be investigated and made safe. The law will be extended to cover additional hazards in 2026 and 2027.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Damp and Mould Policy already adhered to the timeframes within the regulations, but they are now law and mentioned directly in the Policy. The review has clarified points within the Policy, such as what is the Councils responsibility and what is the tenants. Information on understanding damp and mould has been added; this will also be in a leaflet which is being created for tenants which will be available on our website. ○ The aim is for this to go to Cabinet on 2 February <p>Action: Jodi to send Beth Damp and Mould Policy</p> <p>Action: Beth to email tenants policy to review prior to next meeting</p>	<p>Jodi Blizzard</p> <p>Beth Becks</p>
7	<p><u>Forward Plan 1.05pm</u></p> <p>Social value brainstorm – tenants to share and discuss ideas at next meeting</p> <p>Xmas lunch 9th December – Action: Beth to send details to all</p>	<p>Beth Becks</p>
8	<p>Meeting Close</p> <p>Date of next meeting: – Tuesday 27th January 2026, HMS Brave, DDC Offices</p>	