



Minutes

Dover District Tenants' Consultative Group Meeting

Tuesday 14th July 2026

11am-1pm

Council Chamber, DDC

Members:

Neil Drakley

Karen Smitton

Gordon Cheeseman

Jennifer Cheeseman

Apologies:

Bruce Smithard

Chris Tough

Chris Hanagan

Carol Hill

Sarah Kidney

Dover District Council:

Perry DeSouza, Strategic Housing Manager

Beth Becks, Principal Tenant Engagement and Monitoring Officer (Minute Taker)

Darran Solley, Parks and Open Spaces

Sean Gilmore, Parks and Open Spaces

Cllr Pamela Brivio – Portfolio Holder for Housing, Skills and Education

1	Welcome, Instructions and Apologies It was acknowledged that there was a large amount of apologies for this meeting.	
2	Minutes and Actions Action: Minutes Agreed	
3	<u>Updates</u> Regulatory Inspection Outcome – BB thanked DDTCG for their support during the regulatory inspection, which earned DDC a C2 grade.	

	Improvements required for a C1 include: • Launching a Scrutiny Group • Improved learning from complaints • Greater understanding of our tenants. More information: Inspection outcome - Dover District Council TPAS Chair's Training Update – BB congratulated ND on his successful completion of Chairs training and presented him with a certificate.	
4	Mears - Karen Smitton updates • There is a delay on asbestos checks. • There are recruitment difficulties and they have vacancies. • Neil and Karen to attend next Mears meeting.	
5	<u>Grounds Maintenance</u> Darran explained that dedicated Housing team was approved by DDC and posts were appointed to. The team have Operatives, skilled operatives and team leaders. DS explained that roles are advertised internally first, to be able to give people opportunities. 4 posts are vacant currently. There are a lot of tasks coming from Housing. High turnover of staff in the horticulture industry. Response times and service standards should improve. Weeds have been a problem across all sites, it was removed from the waste contract in 2021, and P&OS have been picking it up. There has been an accumulation over time, causing damage to surfaces. KS asked about a weed spraying van she saw in Dover town yesterday. DS explained that KCC pay Viola through DDC to do weed spraying that is highways responsibilities. Contractor provisionally booked to start on Monday. There are internal conversations to be had about where weeds sit, whether it's with waste or P&OS. Perfect season for grass growing as it's growing slowly, but weeds are growing very fast. Inspections to start soon, RAG rating, to help with forecasting and provision.	

	KS raised a dead tree at Bomford which she had told an operative, but it was not dealt with. DS said that operatives should be asking residents to raise these through the website or email address, so it can be addressed correctly. GC asked if he can weed the area himself. DS said we have had issues with tenants planting roses and then it has to be dealt with. Pots would be acceptable but it has been an issue. DS said that GC can weed areas but it's nothing something that's encouraged with chemicals, but we would support hand pulling weeds. DS said that his team attend Estate Walkabouts with Housing staff and tenants	
6	<u>Housing Performance Reporting and Annual Report</u> Annual report – waiting for finance to provide figures. Action: PD asked for this to be added to next agenda TSM Results – split into 2 sets of results, survey results and performance related results. PD explained the areas of strong performance, including that we are performing above national median for overall satisfaction. PD explained that lift safety is a poor percentage because we have a low number of lifts, just 1 lift was not compliant on 31st March. It is currently fully compliant. PD explained what we will be doing. Results here: Tenant Satisfaction Measures - Dover District Council Action: Complaints handling to be first Scrutiny subject to be looked at. Home safety to be looked at too.	PD BB
	Housing Policy Update • New Tenancy Agreement ○ PD presented a presentation explaining the new Tenancy Agreement ○ Approved by Cabinet last Monday. Notice of Variation to be sent this week. ○ New Terms will be in affect from 24th August. ○ Copies will be sent in the post over the next month. ○ Tenants won't have to sign the notice.	

	• Code of Conduct for Housing Staff ○ PD presented a presentation explaining the new CoC ○ New training and development Policy for staff – to be added to next agenda Action: Beth share CoC on email, and for DDTCG Members to reply with questions.	BB & DDTCG
7	Resident Engagement Update 12.30 • New groups ○ 3 Scrutiny Group Sign-ups ○ Cleaning Focus Group (27 responses to Cleaning Survey) • Chairs Training ○ ND expressed that he learned so much and met lots of people from other Housing providers. ○ BB asked if anyone would like to take advantage of TPAS training, to let her know. • Leaseholder Forum ○ 18 Leaseholders attended. We received mixed feedback that staff did a great job of providing information, but behaviour and time management needs to be improved for next time. ○ JC – have the speaker speak, and Q&A after. • Garden Competition Update ○ Judging – 28th July ○ Prize Giving – 13th Aug 2-3.30 • Tenant Communications • Housing Events (inc. Walmer Children's Festival) • Tenant Conference – 22nd August 2026 ○ Who is attending (T-Shirts?) BB to send an email out to get numbers ○ Stall planning – seeds – show garden competition on big screen. ○ Examples of minutes and agendas.	DDTCG
8	Forward Plan 12.55 <i>Perry annual report</i> <i>Mears</i>	
9	Meeting Close Date of next meeting: – Tuesday 1st September 2026, HMS Brave, DDC Offices	

Please note: a short comfort break will be included halfway through the meeting.