

SAMPLE

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

COMPACT FOR

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Northern Ireland
Housing Executive



Foreword

A Compact is a formal agreement for use between the Housing Executive and a representative Community Forum, such as local Community Groups and District Housing Community Networks.

It is essential, and this is recognised in the Core Standards which are the formal basis of each Compact, that any forum is fully representative and inclusive, properly constituted and is able to perform its agreed role within the Compact.

The principal objective of each Compact is to provide the Community Forum, acting on behalf of the Community, and the Housing Executive with the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards for Community Participation, particularly in the development of housing and related services.

It is well recognised that individual Community Representatives may be owner occupiers or in privately rented accommodation, as well as Housing Executive tenants. Consequently, any reference to Tenants will include any Community representative authorised to act on its behalf, irrespective of their particular tenure.

Each Forum will have its own individual skills and priorities. To allow those differences and capacities to be acknowledged, the Compact format is flexible enough to meet the current needs and aspirations of the Tenants concerned. At the same time, it is capable of being developed over time, in discussion with the Housing Executive.

It is important that both Tenants and the Officers concerned work closely together to achieve the 6 Core Standards, against the agreed measures.

The importance of that partnership is central to our future relationship, the real value of compacts, and the future of housing in serving the Community in Northern Ireland.

On Behalf of the Housing Executive, I am very pleased to make the commitment that each Compact, irrespective of the level at which it will apply, will be entered into by the Managers and Staff concerned in a full and engaging way.

I wish everyone well in meeting the challenges offered to us.

Dr John McPeake
Chief Executive

Section 1

Housing Services

Allocations and Lettings

- Monthly updates provided of properties allocated.
- N.I.H.E. Staff to include the newsletter/welcome leaflet at sign up.
- N.I.H.E. Staff to include contact point for local Community Group reps and or Community House details.
- Arrange for the Neighbourhood Officer or Housing Officer to visit within 6 weeks.

Day to Day Estate Management Issues

- Neighbourhood Officer to liaise with the Community Group on a weekly basis to address issues of concern.
- An estate walkabout to be held annually (Attendance: One member of Management Team, others as required; Housing Officer; Grounds Maintenance and at least 2 Community Reps).

Housing Surgery

- To be provided on a monthly basis.

Response Maintenance

- Monitor Maintenance Performance - response times (emergency/urgent/routine/change of tenancy).
- Method of monitoring to be agreed with District Office.
- Egan Contractor to provide relevant staff names and contact telephone numbers to the Community Group (when applicable).

Planned Schemes

- Community Group to be made aware of individual project nos., scheme addresses and scheme network, dates and work schedule.
- Community Group to be involved as per Consultation Standards (Appendix 1).

Grounds Maintenance

- Community Group to monitor programme of work e.g. clean ups; grass cutting schedule; schedule of work for estate.
- Community Group to provide feedback to District on Contractor performance.
- Egan Contractor to provide relevant staff names and contact telephone numbers to the Community Group.
- N.I.H.E. to provide map to group identifying area in contract.

N.I.H.E. Staff

- Named:

District Manager	_____	Tel: _____
Assistant District Manager	_____	Tel: _____
Housing Officer	_____	Tel: _____
Maintenance Officer	_____	Tel: _____
Community L.O.	_____	Tel: _____
Neighbourhood Officer	_____	Tel: _____

- Community Group to be made aware of any relevant staff changes by telephone within 3 days of change becoming effective.
- The Community Group should be introduced to the new member of staff as soon as possible.

Section 2

Resources

Photocopying

- Community Group to provide____ days notice for copying required.
- A maximum of _____copies per request.
- Community Group will request this service no more than 6 times per year.

Printing Newsletters/Reports (printing to be provided by Area Office)

- Community Group to provide 21 days notice
- Maximum number of copies_____ per request (according to size of estate or area covered).
- Frequency of request 4 per year.
- Design of newsletters to be agreed on request.
- Community Group to proof read before final print.
- Newsletter must be in line with constitution e.g. non political.

District Community Notice Board

- Group to provide updated copies of flyers/news sheets/information leaflets to D.O. for display on the Notice Board on a quarterly basis.

Office Venue

- N.I.H.E. Venue to be made available for relevant Community Group meetings during working hours if available and on request for Inter-Agency meetings, Housing Forum etc.
- 14 days notice to be provided.

Provision of Equipment

- Community Group to provide a programme of works before the provision of equipment agreed.
- District Office to make available equipment as per agreed list (Appendix 2).
- Community Group to provide 21 days notice.
- Frequency of request to be 2 times per year.

Community Premises

- Provision of a Community House at a peppercorn rental subject to availability, housing need and the capacity of the group.
- Address _____

Training

- Community Group can avail of training on specific housing issues via:
 - District Housing Community Network
 - Community Association Committee
- Topics can include:
 - Allocations/Homelessness
 - Housing Benefit
 - Maintenance
 - Consultation Standards
 - EGAN
 - Community Safety/A.S.B.

* 1 months notice required.

Community Service Agreement

- Community Group to negotiate details of a Community Service Agreement where applicable.

Digital Inclusion

- Community Group to be provided with appropriate support to access and update their website.

Section 3

Meetings

Housing Forum

- Agenda will be agreed and forwarded to N.I.H.E. 10 days in advance of meeting.
- Standard Agenda items to include:
 - Welcome
 - Apologies
 - Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - Matters Arising
 - Housing Services
 - voids
 - schemes
 - response maintenance
 - waiting list
 - A.S.B./Neighbourhood Nuisance
 - Grounds Maintenance
 - Committee Update - Local Issues
 - Any Other Business
 - Date of Next Meeting
- Meetings to be facilitated by _____.
- Meetings to be minuted by _____.
- Minutes to be circulated 15 working days after meeting.
- Issues of concern raised at meeting to be followed up within 21 working days and feedback provided by N.I.H.E.
- Meeting will be attended by maximum of 4 representatives of Community Group.
- N.I.H.E. attendees:
 - 1 member of Senior Management Team
 - Housing Officer
 - Maintenance Officer (optional)
 - Neighbourhood Officer (optional)

- Refreshments - Tea/Coffee to be provided by _____
- Programme of meetings for incoming year to be agreed in advance.

Inter-Agency/Strategy Meetings

- Agenda to be agreed and forwarded to mailing list 10 days in advance of meeting.
- Meeting to be facilitated by _____
- Meetings to be minuted by _____
- Minutes circulated within 21 working days.
- Inter-Agency meetings to be attended by maximum of 4 Community Representatives.
- N.I.H.E. attendees - Member of Senior Management Team
 - Neighbourhood Officer
 - Housing Officer
- Programme of meetings for incoming year to be agreed in advance.

* Day to day Housing Management issues not to be dealt with at Inter-Agency Strategy/Meetings.

Public Meetings

- Where necessary a member of Senior Management Team may be asked to attend Public Meetings or Annual General Meetings.
- Agenda for same would be provided 21 days in advance.
- Date, time and venue of meeting to be mutually agreed.

Section 4

Information

Leaflets/Posters

- Display space to be provided in Community Premises.
- Leaflets to be provided by D.O. on request.
- Leaflets to be checked and updated on a quarterly basis.

Newsletters

- N.I.H.E. to provide 2 articles per year on request (e.g. scheme update; Arrears Prevention; Housing Benefit).
- All information provided to be up to date and in plain language.
- Community Group to provide 21 days notice.

Consultation Events

- N.I.H.E. to make use of Community Group Base for any Consultation/ Public meetings where suitable.
- 21 days notice to be provided.

Publicity/P.R.

- N.I.H.E. to provide posters/flyers/leaflets for display in Community Base highlighting contact details for Staff and opening hours.
- Use of Area Information Officers e.g. assist with press releases.
- Provision of Handbook and updated.

Policy/Legislation

- Community Group to be kept abreast of relevant policies which affect estate e.g. additional car parking; leasing of land; community lettings; transfer of land prior to approval.

Section 5

Representative Community Organisations

District Community Notice Board

- Community Group to provide up to date information for display on the Notice Board on a monthly/quarterly basis.

District Housing Community Network (D.H.C.N.)

- 2 Community Group reps _____ and _____ to attend the District Housing Community Network meetings.
- Members should attend 75% of organised meetings and send apologies if not attending.
- Representatives to update their Committee on D.H.C.N. issues.

Constitution

- Community Group to adhere to the terms of their constitution.

Group Details

- Community Group to provide District Office with A.G.M. details on an annual basis.
 - A.G.M. minutes
 - Annual Accounts
 - Committee/Office Bearers elected
- District Office to be kept up to date on changes to Committee/Office Bearers within 10 working days.

Contractual Agreements

- Community Group to comply with any contractual agreements/arrangements with N.I.H.E. e.g. Community Service Agreement.

Wider Community

- Community Group to ensure that the wider Community are kept up to date on housing issues/meetings.
- Community Group to produce newsletter/news sheet and circulate to all residents on a quarterly basis.

Planning

- Community Group to agree a Plan of Action on an annual basis following their A.G.M.

Community Base/Premises

- Public Liability Insurance to be taken out by Community Group and copy of the Certificate forwarded annually to the District Office.

Digital Inclusion

- Community Group who have websites should keep them updated on a regular basis.

Section 6

Mutual Commitment

We will:

- Work together in developing the provision of the best possible Housing Service.
- Work together to achieve the resources for meaningful participation.
- Work together to achieve full participation of Group.
- Work together to provide highest possible standards for consultation, information and communication.
- Work together to achieve representative Group.
- Jointly monitor and measure performance on a regular basis with an Annual Review (After A.G.M. of Community Group).

Declaration

This Compact is the formal agreement between the Northern Ireland Housing Executive _____ District Office and Community Group for the period _____ to _____.

Each party to the Compact has discussed and agreed its contents; in particular, the Standards, their application and the arrangements for monitoring and reporting on them.

Those signing the Compact have been authorised to act on behalf of the Community Group and the Housing Executive respectively.

Each further reference to the Community Group and the Housing Executive will be the 'Group' and the 'Executive' respectively.

It is understood that no liability extends to either party beyond that stated in the document.

Date of Commencement _____

Review dates: 6 monthly _____ Annual _____

Chairperson
Community Group

District Manager
Housing Executive

Secretary
Community Group

Assistant District Manager
Housing Executive

Appendix 1

Consultation Standards

Appendix 2

Equipment Available

Appendix 3

Adverse Weather Conditions