

## Tenant Services Management Board – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2011

### Formalisation of Tenant Involvement to develop Supported Housing Services

#### Report of Christine Thompson, Supported Housing Manager

#### Executive Summary

This report has been produced to describe the work undertaken by TDBC to involve tenants' in developing housing related support services.

It outlines the process in place together with the role of the members of the Sheltered Housing Forum, Supported Housing Service Development Group, and why this is a time to consider change.

The report considers how the role of the Sheltered Housing Forum currently works in relation to the Tenant Services Management Board.

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to give members the opportunity to reflect on the existing arrangements that TDBC has in place for tenants in supported housing to get involved in the development of the services they are entitled to. To share and seek member's views on the development of this process to ensure it adds value to the service in a way that is value for money.

#### 2.0 Background to this report.

TDBC has just over a thousand properties, in Low Level (Hardwired, non-estate) Sheltered and Extra Care Housing.

There are a number of ways that TDBC currently offers a range of opportunities for tenants to influence how TDBC meet their landlord responsibilities. Examples of how this is currently done is provided on **Appendix 1** TDBC do not currently scrutinise their performance against standards in a formal way. It is a recommendation from the Department of Communities and Local Government that there should be a more formal process.

The Sheltered Housing Forum has been active since 2003.

The Constitution for the Sheltered Housing Forum is shown as **Appendix 2**

The aims of the Forum are to:

- rights of tenants living in Sheltered Housing Schemes.
- Providing information to tenants living in TDBC sheltered schemes, on issues that affect them, and services that would be beneficial to them.
- Actively encourage all Sheltered Housing resident to become involved and participate in matters that affect them.

Meetings are held quarterly in January, April, July and October each year on the third Thursday of the month. There is a standard Agenda, as shown in **Appendix 3**

The current Chair has undertaken a lot of work to promote the service. She has visited schemes, attended the majority of meetings during her term of office since her election in 2007.

Since the formation of the Sheltered Housing Forum tenants have raised issues which can then be investigated between meetings and reported back to the next meeting. This can cause delays and projects can seem to take a long time to complete.

The Forum constitution states that notes of meeting should be made available to all tenants following each meeting. Attempts have been made to send all tenants copies of notes but this is both time consuming and expensive. Copies of notes are displayed in the meeting halls but not all residents have access to them.

At the Annual general meeting, officers are elected and reports are given by the outgoing Chair and the Supported Housing Manager. This includes a summary of issues raised at previous meetings throughout the year. An example of topics is shown on **Appendix 4**.

Service Development Group – Over the past twelve months there have been a number of issues which have been developed with a smaller number of tenants who have volunteered to form a Service Development Group.

This has proved to be an effective way of resolving issues and, they have been involved with the following projects.

- Discussed and agreed revision of the Service Standards
- Developed a promotional leaflet for the service
- Participated in workshops to review the current team working practice and feedback their views on effectiveness from the clients perspective,
- Developed a Calendar for distribution to raise awareness of the service. This has been made available to new and prospective tenants, those who contributed to this piece of work, Housing Officers, SP Team, Adult Social Care, members of the Sheltered Housing Forum, TSMB and regular users of the meeting halls. Active and inspirational in promoting the Raising Awareness events held at Kilkenny Court and Lodge Close in 2010.

How the Forum, Service Development and Tenants Services Management Board are linked is shown at **Appendix 5**

### **3.0 Current Position**

Since 2003 there have been 3 tenants who have been active in Chairing the Sheltered Housing Tenants Forum and leading the development of the service with the support of TDBC officers. The current Chair is planning to stand down at the Annual General Meeting in April 2011. It has not been possible during this time to appoint a secretary and support has been provided by Officers and now the Business Support Unit. There is a huge expectation on the Chair as they are eligible to attend the Housing Forum and to encourage tenants to bring forward their worries and concerns.

The outgoing Chair has reflected on the effectiveness of the Forum, and considered the benefits of the Development group. In her view it has been more effective than the forum. This led officers to consider how this group could be incorporated, more formally, and how this links the newly formed Tenant Services Management Board.

### **4.0 Proposals for the future**

The Sheltered Housing forum to take on a more directive role, meet less often and give instruction to officers who will then work with the Service Development to formulate reports to the TSMB. The role of the TSMB will take on a scrutiny role to review and ensure regulation. **Appendix 5** identifies how this is currently set up, **Appendix 6** sets out proposals for the future.

That the Sheltered Housing Forum Constitution be amended to reflect that they meet on an annual basis to review the work undertaken by officers and the Service Development during the previous 12 months. Following which an Annual report is made available to tenants.

That the Service Development Group take on projects that can be dealt with more flexibly i.e. meet every week if there is an urgent project or less often if there are no immediate issues.

The monitoring of projects, and performance should be reported to the TSMB on a regular basis.

### **5.0 Financial Position**

The Sheltered Housing Forum currently have a budget of £3,000 awarded by the Tenants Forum which meets the cost of running meetings and it is suggested that this continues.

## **6.0 Impact on Tenants**

In line with the Government's commitment to reduce the number of quangos, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) is to be abolished and its economic regulation and backstop consumer regulation functions transferred to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

It is with this in mind that TDBC wish to formalise the current processes and put in the place the most effective, yet cost efficient methods possible with the aim of having a localism mechanism to address routine problems. In addition TDBC aim to have systems in place which will enable tenants to hold their landlord to account, giving them the opportunity to press for better services.

## **7.0 Diversity**

Any information provided for the Sheltered Housing Forum, Service Development Group will be available in different formats:

- Large font
- Audio version
- Different languages
- Website page
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All meetings held have level access or lift provision, and loop system.

## **8.0 Timetable**

21<sup>st</sup> February 2011 consultation with current Chair of the Sheltered Housing Forum to discuss options about effective consultation in the future.

15<sup>th</sup> March 2011 report to be considered by Tenant Services Management Board.

28<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 – report to Sheltered Housing Forum outlining future proposals together with recommended changes for the constitution.

## **9.0 Information Plan**

It is intended to let all new tenants know how they can get involved in the decision making process by including information in the Tenants Welcome pack.

## **10.0 Links to Corporate Aims** (Please refer to the current edition of the Corporate Strategy)

Proposals have the potential to impact on the Corporate Aims: Tackling Deprivation and sustainable Community Development; Regeneration; and Affordable Housing

## **11.0 Recommendations**

- Receive and note this report;
- Consider the proposed suggestions and comment
- Task Officers to consult members of the Sheltered Housing Forum, and write a revised Sheltered Housing Forum constitution.
- Task Officers to write draft terms of reference for the Service Development Group

### **Contact Officer:**

Supported Housing Manager  
Christine Thompson  
[c.thompson@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:c.thompson@tauntondeane.gov.uk)  
01823 339145

## Appendix 1

### Opportunities for tenants to get involved in the Development of Housing Related Support Services.

Type of activity	Tenant Involvement	Comments
Written Service Standards	Approved by tenants, referred to TSMB	Available to all
Service has been inspected and validated by Supporting People.	Tenants are part of the validation process, volunteers are interviewed by members of the SP team	Funding is dependant on the Quality Assessment Framework being maintained at Level C
Satisfaction Surveys	Written questionnaire sent annually to tenants in Extra Care Housing (ECH).	Satisfaction 87% in ECH.
Satisfaction Surveys	Opportunity in 2011 for tenants to get involved in the best ways to test satisfaction.	Date planned for Service Development Group to meet to discuss options.
Tenants meetings	Regular meetings in ECH, more random in Sheltered schemes	Not all schemes have meeting halls so more difficult to include all tenants in this process
Complaints dealt with via TDBC Compliments and Complaints procedure seen as an opportunity to improve services,	Tenants are encouraged to use this process to record their views. Information is available at all schemes as to how they can use this process.	Limited complaints received but those received have helped TDBC to consider how tenants views could change service delivery.
Sheltered Housing Forum	Tenants nominated and voted for main roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurers. Reps from all properties encouraged to attend the meetings, held quarterly. Maximum of 2 could vote if necessary. AGM annually.	Over the past eight years the voting process has not been used.
Housing Forum	Tenants nominated and voted onto Forum.	
Supported Housing Development Group	Tenants from any form of supported housing eligible and join the group for specific projects.	
Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB)		

## **Appendix 3**

Example of an Agenda for :

### ***Sheltered Housing Forum***

**Thursday 27 January 2011 in JMR @ 1400hrs**

#### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting
4. Matters Arising **All**
5. Update from Supported Housing Team **Gareth Denslow  
Sharon Harvey**

#### **Break**

6. AGM 28<sup>th</sup> April 2011 – Newton Road  
Ideas for Guest Speaker, Election of Officers
7. Any Other Business **All**

Next meeting: AGM Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2011

## **Appendix 4**

### **Example of projects reported to Sheltered Housing Forum at the Annual General meeting in April, 2010**

#### **Supporting People Contracts,**

An update about the funding and renewal of contracts with Supporting People for Sheltered, low level and Extra Care (ECH), ending of Community Alarm contract.

#### **Meeting the standards of Supporting People,**

Evidence provided to show TDBC are working well towards achieving Level C  
Introduction of new needs and risk assessment policy and forms, including assessment of prospective tenants  
Revision of existing policies/procedures

#### **Working with tenants - Consultation 2010**

Sheltered Housing Team worked closely with the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurers and Secretary.

Pre-meetings arranged to discuss guest speakers and Agenda's.

Reintroduction of Service Development Group, which meets as and when needed.

Setting up Health & Safety Champions

#### **Information given about staff working in the Supported Housing Teams and their roles.**

### **Information given about the challenges for 2010/11**

#### **Challenges ahead – Sheltered**

- ◆ How to improve satisfaction?
- ◆ Implementing tenants choice?
- ◆ Raising the profile of the Sheltered Housing Forum to enable them to make a positive contribution and influence decisions
- ◆ Raise awareness regarding the benefits of wearing pendants to help tenants to stay safe
- ◆ Finalisation re: use of guest rooms

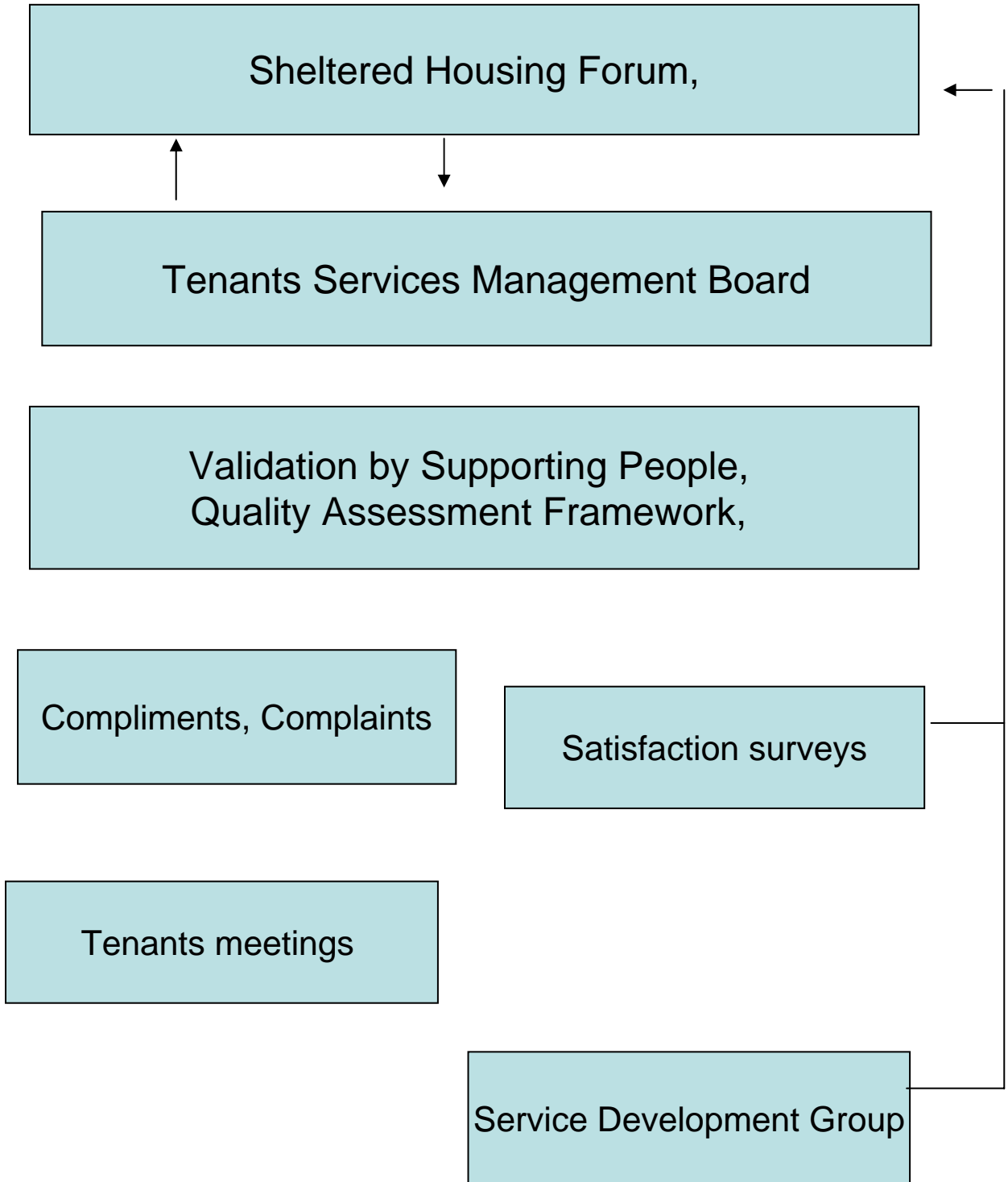
#### **Challenges ahead – Extra Care**

- ◆ Review of Health & Safety procedures
- ◆ Work with residents re: concerns about meal provision
- ◆ Encourage tenants to get involved in their community
- ◆ Actively encourage residents to use the communal facilities
- ◆ Complete new risk/needs assessments and support plans for all clients by March 2011

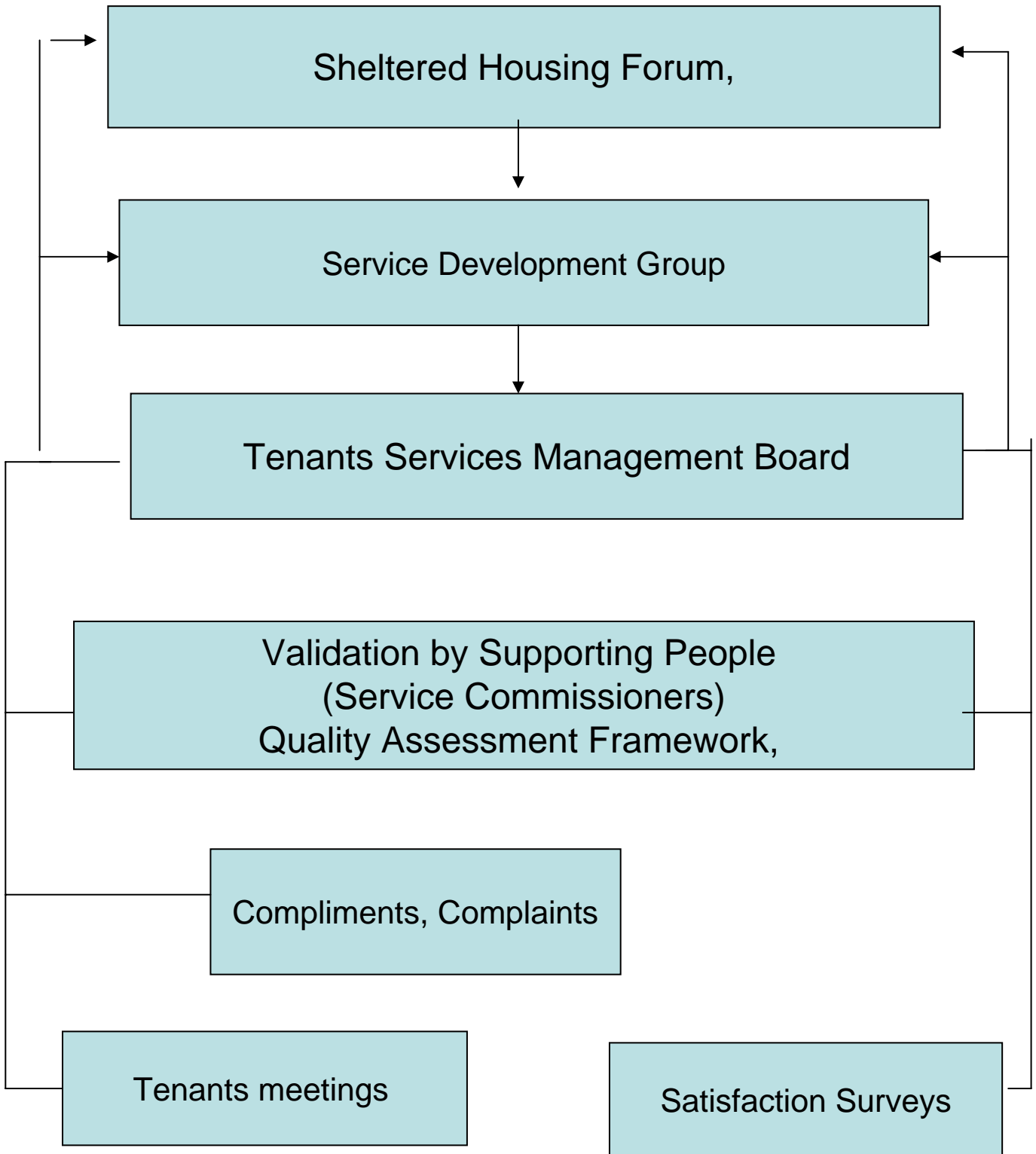




**Existing process for involving tenants to develop  
Housing related Support services**



**Proposed process for involving tenants to develop Housing related Support services**





**TAUNTON DEANE**  
**SHELTERED HOUSING TENANTS' FORUM**

**CONSTITUTION**

1. NAME

Taunton Deane Sheltered Housing Tenants' Forum.

2. OBJECTIVES

To promote the rights of tenants living in the sheltered housing schemes of Taunton Deane Borough Council .

To provide information to tenants living in Taunton Deane Borough Council sheltered schemes, on issues that affect them, and services that would be beneficial to them.

To identify and seek to promote, the implementation of improvements to housing conditions, amenities, social activities and the environment available to sheltered scheme residents.

To actively encourage all sheltered scheme residents to become involved and participate in the work of the Forum.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all tenants living in Taunton Deane Borough Council sheltered housing schemes; regardless of nationality, political party, race, religious opinion, sex, sexuality or disability.

4. CONDUCT

It is a condition that members shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable way at Forum meetings or when representing the Forum on other occasions.

All members shall be open and honest in their dealings and show respect for other members.

All speakers will address themselves through the Chairperson.

Only one person shall speak at a time and shall keep to the subject under discussion.

All members shall abide by the decisions taken at meetings.

## 5. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The business of the group shall be conducted by the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and other residents attending meetings. The Secretary shall ensure that a proper record is kept of each meeting and these are produced in the form of a news sheet. These will be made available to all Taunton Deane Borough Council sheltered scheme residents, within one month of the meeting.

Sheltered scheme residents may nominate **two** people from their scheme to attend Forum meetings on their behalf.

Meetings of the Forum shall be held each quarter, and one of these, usually the Spring of each year, shall be the Annual General Meeting. At this meeting, officers of the Forum will be elected. Members who have held an officer post in the previous year, shall stand down annually but may stand for re-election.

Also elected at the meeting will be two representatives to sit on the Taunton Deane Tenants' Forum. One to represent Taunton and the surrounding area and one to represent Wellington and the surrounding area. These may also be elected officers of the Sheltered Housing Forum.

Should a decision require to be made at a Forum meeting, this shall be done by a simple majority vote.

## 6. QUORUM

A minimum number of nine sheltered scheme residents will be required to ensure there is a quorum. In the event of an equal vote, the Chairperson shall be entitled to the casting vote.